













ATALANTA:

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Frontispieces.

I.—UNCONSCIOUS RIVALS		 	 Alma Tadema, R.A
II.—IN MY STUDIO		 	 Alma Tadema, R.A.
III.—THE NEW CAVALIER	4.	 	 F. VINEA.
IV.—THE FORTUNE-TELLER			 F. VINEA.
V.—THE EMPTY CHAIR			 BRITON RIVIERE.
VI.—PUNCH AND JUDY		 	 DE BLAAS,
VII.—GETHSEMANE		 	 H. HOFMANN.
			P. SALLINI.
IXBEYOND THE SHADOWS		 	 FALERO.
X.—THE WEDDING PARTY			
XI.—ST. CECELIA		 	 NAUJOK.
XIIL'AMOUR BRISANT SON			

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS. Authors.

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Inder.

	1	PAGI
NCIENT COPYRIGHT		
NIMALS THAT GIVE LIGHT	A. W. WILSON	56
AUTHORS' COUNTIES:		
I. KENT: CHARLES DICKENS I	BENJAMIN TAYLOR, F.R.G.S.	. 1
II. DEVONSBIRE: BLACKMORB	S. BARING GOULD ,	8
III. WARWICKSHIRE: GEORGE ELIOT	GEORGE MOBLEY	16
IV. YORKSHIRE: CHARLOTTE BRONTE .	ALEX. H. JAPP, LL.D.	22
V. ESSEX AND NORTHUMBERLAND:		
WALTER BESANT		29
VI. CUMBERLAND AND THE ISLE OF MAN :		
HALL CAINE	J. ASHCROFT NOBLE	35

BIRDS OF SCOT					
BLACKBIRD I	N NOVE	MEER,	THE.		
Poem				E. NESBIT	
BLIND SINGER,					
BY THE SEA. 1	Poem			WM. K. HILL	
CIDITIANCIDI	T 1 Dec	/ 111			
CARAVANSARA	I, A. FOE	111. (111	ustratea	77 1	
by J. K. SADLE					
COMPARISON.	Poem			DAISY ARGLES	
COURSE OF TRU	JE LOVE,	THE		CYRIL GREY 46.	, 111, 193,
			312.	383, 416, 51 531	. 595, 659

	Ende	nr c	antinued.		
	PAC	G FE		PAGE	
OWNS AND CORONETS. (Illustrated by Harold MacParlane		25	ORGAN BABY, AN	JOHN STEANOR WINTER 129	
JET, A. Poem, Rlustrat l		95	PERFUMES	J. SUTHERLAND 29	
FERIA'S DAUGHTER. Poem. (I'ustrated by H. RYLANO)	JESSIE MACKAT II ANNIE L. KNOWLES . 4	91		C. F. GOROON CUMMING . 299	
			POEM BY QUEEN ELI/ABETH. (Flus- trated by C. E. RICKETTS.) POET'S WORLD, THE. Poem POT-POURRI. Poem PROVINCIAL SCHOOL OF ART, A	MAIGABET ARMOUR . 484	
LLACY OF OUR TIME, A LLING IN LOVE VE O'CLOCK TEA AT HAMPTON COURT. (Idustrated by HAROLD MAC-				ELLA JEFFREISS 752	
PABLANE	R. Brown-Paynter 1 J. R. Clissosp	134 162 198	REMEMBER. Poem. ROMANCE OF LONDON, THE. Illustra-	BEATRICE CREGAN 371	
			ROMAN VILLA AT DARENTH, THE. (Illustrated by W. F. Youno)		
RDEN THAT I LOVE, THE. Poem. (Illustrated)	E. NESBIT	4763	ROSE MARIE, Poem. (Illustrated)	CHALLOTTE BAIN 434	
APPY HALT, THE. Poem	MARY REOTHERTON 5 MARY CAUMONT		RUSTIC FLIRTATION, A	GRORDE MORLEY 501	
DW A GIRL LIVED IN ANCIENT ATHENS			SCREWED UP TO THE STICKING- PLACE	PROF. FOSTER WATSON . 443	
NO OF THE MIDDLE AGES (11/10)			AYMON, THE	E. NESRIT AND OSWALD	
trated by W. Amor Fenn)	J. BEIERLEY, B.A . 7	66	SERMON ON HOUSES, A SHADOW-MUSIC, Poem. SILENCE THAT IS OOLDEN SILVER MUG, THE. SNUBBING A SAPPHO SOLITARY BEES. (Illustrates).	Lady Jephson 156 C. Jelf-Shalp 268	
ART DE TENIR SALON	Lady Jeruson . 2	231	SILENCE THAT IS GOLDEN .	AGNES OBERNE 195	
ART DE TENIR SALON ST LADY CRESSBROOK, THE ST SWALLOW, THE Poem. NES	R. Muhray Gieculist . 2	249	SILVER MUG, THE	ELLA J. FRASER 430	
ST SWALLOW, THE. Poem	S. Cornish Watkins	60	SNUBBINO A SAPPHO	E. SPICER-JAY . 621	
NES	P. B. SYMONDS 7	741	SOLITARY BEES. (Ill strated,	E. CARTER	
			SOME CAT FRIENDS	MAXWELL GRAY . 485	
by J. K. Saoler			SOME CAT FRIENDS	MAXWELL GRAY 706	
JORCAN VILLAGE, A	FLORENCE FREEMAN ?	100	trated by MARY HD.L	Droum C Magnetine 445	
DERN GREEK SONGS	6	519	STARRY SKY, THE	J. ELEARD GORE, F.R.A.S. 368	
trated by HAROLD MACFABLANK	R. D. BLACKMORE . 1.	67	STORIES OF SOME FAMOUS PICTURES. (Idustrated)	KINETON PARKES . 377, 478, 550, 672	
COURNING BRIDE, THE"	Mas. Para . 551, 645, 710, 7	779	STORY OF A DELIVERANCE, THE	Phor. A. J. Church 302	
EDUCATION OF GENTLEWOMEN		634	STORY OF A HIGHLAND STRATH-	JESSIE MACLEOD 684	
ISINGS IN AN OLD OLD OARDEN.	THE DEAN OF OLOUCESTER	97	STORY OF A HIGHLAND STRATH SPEY, THE STORES IN AUTHORSHIP	An Old Pen 61	
THERE IS A GARDEN IN HER	777		THREE GRACES, THE	Mrs. HUNGRRPORD 9, 73, 148, 211, 275, 339, 403, 467	
		109	THREE REPRESENTATIVE HEROINES IN FICTION	G. MOUNT	
ULLABY: O HUSH THEE, MY BABIE" UTUMN: A DIRGE	W. AUGUSTUS BARRATT . 1	183	TO MY OLD DOG'S PORTRAIT. I'cem	MALY BROTHERTON 688	
UTUMN: A DIRGE	J. St. Anthony Johnson 3	309	TRAVELLING	AN OLO THAVELLES	
HE LADY OF SEVILLA	W. AUGUSTUS BABBATT . 3	37:3			
ITHER LAUREL NOR BAY	CHRISTIAN BURKE	92	UNDERGROUND JERUSALEM. (I is-) trate()	F.R.G.S 638	
GLECTED ART, A	MARION	515 298	UNFORGETFULNESS, Poem	F. D. LITTLE 576 F. H. TRENCH 125	
SUPATIONS FOR GENTLEWOMEN			VANQUISHED. Poem	M. HEDDE : WICK BROWNE 182	
I. LACEWORK AND EMBROIDERY	Louise Touriso	105	WESTFIELD COLLEGE	C S MINNIED 716	
I. Painting	Maywell Gray	287	WHEN MARCH WINDS BLOW. Poem.	CHARLOTTE BAIN	
P. Nurse	BARONESS VON ZEDLITZ . S	851	WHEN WE AWAKE Poem Ulustrated	CHEISTIAN BURKE 511	
V Transition	JANE LEE	426	WHEN WE AWAKE. Poem. Illustrated. WOMAN'S KINGDOM, THE. Poem	E. NESBIT 683	
I. LTIFRATURE	"DARACH"	657	WOOD-VIOLET	RACHEL S. MACNAMARA, 575	
	2				
		1/1	THE PARTY IN THE P		



BY R. D. BLACKMORE.

In Two Parts.

["Mount Arafa, situated about a mile from Mecca, is held in great veneration by the Mussulmans, as a place very proper for penitence. Its fitness in this respect is accounted for by a tradition that Adam and Eve, on being banished out of Paradise, in order to do penance for their transgression were parted from each other, and after a separation of six score years, met again upon this mountain."

Ockley's "History of the Saracens," p. 60.]

THE PARTING.

I.

RIVEN away from Eden's gate
(With blazing falchions fenced about)
Into a desert desolate,
A miserable pair came out,
To meet their fate.

To wander in a world of woe,

To ache and starve, to burn and shiver,
With every living thing their foe—

The fire of God above, the river

Of death below.

Of home, of hope, of Heaven bereft; It is the destiny of man To cower beneath his Maker's ban, And hide from his own theft!



2.

The father of a world unborn—
Who hath begotten death, ere life—
In sullen silence plods forlorn;
His love and pride in his fair wife
Are rage and scorn.

Instead of Angel ministers,

What hath he now but fiends devouring;
Instead of grapes and melons, burs;
In lieu of manna, crab and souring?

By whose fault? Hers!

Alack, good sire of feeble knees,

Newpenance waits thee; since—when thus
Thou shouldst have wept for all of us—
Thou mournest thine own ease!

3.

The mother of all loving wives
(Condemned unborn to many a tear)
Is fain to take his hand, and strives
In sorrow to be doubly dear—
But shame deprives.

The shame, the woe, the black surprise,
That love's first dream should have such
ending—

To weep, and wipe neglected eyes!

Oh loss of true love, far transcending

Lost Paradise!

For is it faith, that cannot live
One gloomy hour, and soar above
The clouds of fate? And is it love,
That will not e'en forgive?

4.

The houseless monarch of the earth
Hath quickly found what empire means;
For while he scoffs with bitter mirth,
And curses, after Eden's scenes,
This dreary dearth.

A snake, that twined in playful zeal,
But yester morn, around his ankle,
Now driven along the dust to steal,
Steals up, and leaves its venom'd rankle
Deep in his heel.

He groans awhile. He seeks ancu
For comfort to this first of pain,
Where all his sons to day are fain;
He seeks—but Eve is gone!



PART I.—ADAM.

O'er hill, and highland, moor, and plain, A hundred years, he seeks in vain; O'er hill and plain, a hundred years, He pours the sorrow no one hears; Yet finds, as wildest mourners find, Some case of heart in toil of mind.

1

- "Ye mountains, that forbid the day,
 Ye glens, that are the steps of night,
 How long amid you must I stray,
 Deserted, banished from God's sight,
 And cast away?
- "Ye trees and flowers the Lord hath made, Ye beasts, to my good-will committed— Although your trust hath been betrayed— Not long ago ye would have pitied Your old comrade.
 - "Oh, nature, noblest when alone,
 Albeit I love your outward part;
 The nature that enthrals my heart
 Must be more like my own.

2.

- "The Maker once appointed me—
 I know not, and I care not why—
 The lord of everything I see,
 Or if they walk, or swim, or fly,
 Whate'er they be.
- "And all the earth whereon they dwell,
 And all the heavens they are inhaling,
 And powers, whereof I cannot tell—
 Dark miscreants, supine and wailing,
 Until I fell.
- "Twas good and glorious to believe;

 But now my majesty is o'er;

 And I would give it all, and more,

 For one sweet glimpse of Eve.

3.

- "For what is glory, what is power?

 And what the pride of standing first?

 A twig struck down by a thunder shower,

 A crown of thistle to quench the thirst,

 A sun-scorched flower.
- "God grant the men who spring from me, As knowledge waxeth deep and splendid,
 - To find a loftier pedigree

 Than any by the Lord intended—
 Frog, slug, or tree!
 - "So shall they live, without the grief Of having female kind to love, Find nought below, and less above, And be their own belief.

4.

- "So weak was I, so poorly taught,
 By any but my Maker's voice,
 Too happy to indulge in thought,
 Which gives me little to rejoice,
 And ends in nought.
- "But now and then, my path grows clear,
 My mind casts off its grim confusion,
 When I have chanced on goodly cheer:
 Then happinessseems no delusion,
 Even down here.
- "With love and faith, to bless the curse,
 To heal the mind by touch of heart,
 To make me feel my better part,
 And fight against the worse.



"The Lord breathed on the first of men, And strung his limbs to strength again; He scorned a century of ill, And girt his loins, to climb the parting hill."

5

"It may be that I did o'erprize,
Above the Giver, that rare gift,
Ungird my will for softer ties,
And hold my manheod little thrift
To woman's eyes.

"So fair she was, so full of grace,
So innocent with coy caresses,
So proud to step at my own pace,
So rosy through her golden tresses,
And such a face!

"Suffice my sins; I'll ne'er approve
A thought against my faithful Eve;
Suffice my sins; I'll ne'er believe
That it was one to love.

6

"Oh love, if e'er this desert plain,
WhereI must sweat with axe and spade,
Shall hold a people sprung from twain,
Or better made by Him, who made
That pair in vain.

"Shall any know, as we have known,
Thy rapture, terror, vaunting, fretting,
Profound despair, ecstatic tone,
Crowning of reason, and upsetting
Of reason's throne?

"Bright honey quaff'd from cells of gall,
Or crimson sting from creamy rose—
Thy heavenly half from Eden flows,
Thy venom from our fall."

Awhile he ceased; for scorching woe
Had made a drought of vocal flow;
When hungry, weary, desolate,
A fox crept home to his den's gate.
The sight brought Adam's memory back,
And touched him with a keener lack.

7.

"Home! Where is home? Of old I thought
(Or felt in mystery of bliss)
That so divinely was I wrought
As not to care for that or this,
And value nought;

"But sit or saunter, rest or roam,
Regarding all things most sublimely,
As if enthroned on heaven's dome;
Away with paltry and untimely
Hankerings for home!

"But now the weary heart is fain
For shelter in some lowly nest—
To sink upon a softer breast,
And smile away its pain.

8.

"For me, what home, what hope is left?
What difference of good or ill?
Of all I ever loved bereft,
Disgraced, discarded, outlawed still,
For one small theft!

"I sicken of my skill and pride;
I work, without a bit of caring.
The world is waste, the world is wide;
Why make good things, with no one sharing

Them, at my side?

"What matters how I dwell, or die? Away with such a niggard life! The Lord hath robbed me of my wife; And life is only I.

9.

"God, who hast said it is not good
For man, thy son, to live alone;
Is everlasting solitude,
When once united bliss was known,
A livelier food?

"Can'st thou suppose it right or just,
When thine own creature so misled us,
In virtue of our simple trust,
To torture us like this, and tread us
Back into dust?

"Oh, fool I am. Oh, rebel worm!

If, when immortal, I was slain,

For daring to impugn his reign,

How shall I, thus infirm?

10.

"Woe me, poor me! No humbler yet,
For all the penance on me laid!
Forgive me, Lord, if I forget
That I am but what Thou hast made,
My soul Thy debt!

"Inspire me to survey the skies,
And tremble at their golden wonder,
To learn the space that I comprise,
At once to marvel, and to ponder,
And drop mine eyes.

"And grant me—for I do but find,
In seeking more than God hath
shown,

I scorn His power and lose my own— Grant me a lowly mind.

II.

"A lowly mind! Thou wondrous sprite,
Whose frolics make their master weep;
Anon, endowed with eagle's flight,
Anon, too impotent to creep,
Or blink aright;—

"Howe'er, thy trumpery flashes play
Among the miracles above thee,
Be taught to feel thy Maker's sway,
To labour, so that He shall love thee,
And guide thy way.

(To be continued.)

"Be led, from out the cloudy dreams
Of thy too visionary part,
To listen to the whispering heart,
And curb thine own extremes.

12.

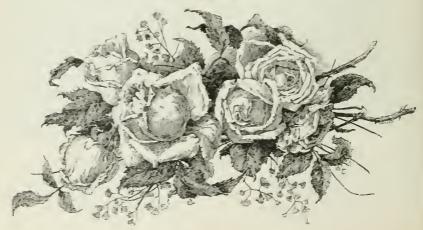
"Then hope shall shine from heaven, and give

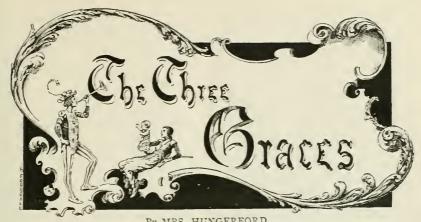
To fruit of hard work, sunny cheek, And flowers of grace and love revive, And shrivelled pasturage grow sleek, And corn shall thrive.

"Beholding gladness, Eve and I,
Enfolding it also in each other,
May talk of heaven without a sigh;
Because our heaven in one another
Love shall supply.

"For courage, faith, and bended knees, By stress of patience, cure distress, And turn wild *Love-in-idleness* Into the true *Heartsease.*"

The Lord breathed on the first of men, And strung his limbs to strength again; He scorned a century of ill, And girt his loins, to climb the parting hill.





By MRS. HUNGERFORD,

Author of "Molly Bawn," "Phyllis," "The Hoyden," &c.

CHAPTER I.

" Come near-I fare the better far, For the sweet food of thy divine advice. Let no man value at a little price, A virtuous woman's counsel.'



ENRIETTA! Henrietta!" roars the squire. The afternoon post has just come in, and with it a telegram. It had arrived in the village as the rural postman was going on his rounds, and

it had seemed to the postmaster a wise and economical thing to send it up by him to The Court.

"Well," says Mrs. Egerton, putting her handsome head in at the door of the squire's den. "Is the house on fire?" She is laughing and lifting her brows a little, as if in protest at his loud calla charming woman, who at thirty-five (two years ago) had found herself a widow with happily few things to regret behind her. She is the squire's sister-in-law and his right hand, the youngest and

now only living sister of his dead wife, and very like what that wife had been when the squire married her some twenty-two years ago.

"No. no: but here's a telegram, and what it means-Come in, can't you? and shut the door."

"A telegram! Nobody ill?"

"Too much alive rather. It's from my cousin, O'Grady, of Ballyclash. Haven't heard from him for twenty years, I think, not since poor Bertha---" he sighs, as he mentions his dead wife's name. He always sighs, indeed, when he speaks it, having never ceased to regret her. She had been the one thing beloved to adoration by his rough irritable nature. "Not since my poor sweetheart and I went there once on a visit. She took a great fancy to him, and to the children, and he to her."

"Ah, he would," says Mrs. Egerton, who is looking grave too. She had been a mere growing girl when Bertha died, but she had remembered that sweet creature always; few who knew her ever forgot. "Well, and the telegram?"

"It is to say he is sending us over one of his girls to stay with us, on a visit I suppose. As if we hadn't enough girls round here already. There, read it." He pushes the telegram towards her across the table. It is certainly very vague.

"Am sending on Betty by next boat, to-morrow will arrive-sure of welcome-old friends-cousins -letter follows-O'Grady."

"Why couldn't letter have come first?" says Mrs. Egerton, very reasonably, it must be allowed.

"That's what I want to know. But it's just like these Irish people, always in such a dev—, beg pardon, beast of a hurry. But now, Henrietta, what do you think of it?"

"What can I think, but that your cousin is sending you one of his girls on a visit in all good faith. You say there was a friendship between you and him and your wife in former times; he is counting on that, no doubt. Of course I knew little of them. Mr. O'Grady is well off?"

"About the richest man in his county, which is, I think, Tipperary. But what he's sending Betty—that's the name, isn't it?" peering at the telegram, "here for, I can't imagine."

"Perhaps she has got into a scrape," says Mrs. Egerton, unguardedly.

"Scrape! scrape! Good heavens, Henrietta, what do you mean? If I found that was so, I'd send her back by next——"

"Telegraph wire," says Mrs. Egerton, laughing.
"My dear John, that's the merest supposition of mine—a bare suggestion. Your own suggestion is much better worthy of notice, that these Irish cousins of yours are so impulsive, so Irish, that having once got the idea into their heads of sending the girl to you—with the view probably of knowing her cousins—they acted on it forthwith."

"I don't believe a word of it," says the squire, getting up, and walking backwards and forwards, his hands crossed behind his back, and his coat tails high in the air.

"Well, then," says kindhearted Mrs. Egerton, quite upset by the hurricane she has raised. "The poor child, poor dear little Betty (I'm sure she is small and pale), may be very ill, and the doctor may have ordered her off to the South of England at a moment's notice. You know what beautiful air we have here, John, and this lovely June weather is so exhilarating, so calculated to breathe health and strength even into the most diseased lungs, that probably the doctors over there thought of it, and then they thought of you, and—and then, of course, came in the impulsiveness you spoke of, and off the dear girl was sent. She'll be here—let me see—to-morrow about——"

"Seven," says the squire.

"No, seven. I suppose I had better send the carriage to the train to meet her?"

"Certainly; but don't you think it is five?"

"No, I don't," shortly. "One would think, Henrietta, I hadn't lived here all my life. There are two trains. Only the very smartest man could catch the one that comes here at five, and she's only a girl."

"Really, John, for a father of three girls you speak very contemptuously," says Mrs. Egerton. "Girls aren't to be despised, I can tell you. Your own wife was a girl once, remember—and so was I." She draws herself up, and then smiles charmingly. Poor old cross John, what's the good of fighting with him? but she does wish he wasn't so stupidly severe about the girls—his daughters. "For one thing," says ske, "I think Madge is now quite old enough to be consulted in a small matter like this."

"Madge! a baby of eighteen."

"I never heard of a baby of eighteen," says Madge's aunt, calmly; "and you ought to consider, John, that she is, in a way, your eldest girl."

"My eldest girl! She is not," said the squire, with sudden sharpness.

"To all intents and purposes she is."

"No, no." A spasm of pain crosses the squire's brow.

"But yes, yes. I can't bear to say it, but Vincent ——"

"I will have no one put over her head," says Mr. Grace, with such sudden sharp anger that even Mrs. Egerton, who has a great spirit of her own, goes down before it.

"Very well," says she. "But for goodness' sake keep your temper, and let us get back to the original trouble, as you won't have Madge to help you."

"All girls are fools," says the squire, sententiously.

"I wonder you don't say all women," says Mrs. Egerton, who is feeling a little annoyed. "So this girl is coming to you to-morrow? Well, according to your views, better than a boy, anyway. You know how you hate your own sex." She picks up the telegram and reads it again.

"Very ambiguous," said she; "not a word as to Betty's morals. I wonder you aren't frightened. But, of course, as she isn't a boy!——Anyway,

[&]quot; Five, I should have thought."

John, you must tell the girls. Their cousin, you know! and a room to be prepared."

"I'm busy. You tell them," says the squire, turning to his writing-table. "Sorry," sarcastically, "you can't give them more joyful news-a Harry, rather than a Betty, would be more congenial to them."

"And very naturally, too," says Mrs. Egerton. "When I was a girl-and I don't mind saying now I was an excellent one-a Jack before a Jill for me, any day."

"I hope," stiffly, "you will not inculcate your nieces with these doctrines."

"Oh, John! what a prig you are," says Mrs. Egerton, with her prettiest smile. "Why don't you wake out of your morbid dreamings, and see what sweet and natural girls your own daughters are?"

"I know, I know-good girls, no doubt," says the squire. "My sweetheart's children could hardly be less!" He generally alludes to his dead wife as his "sweetheart"-a term so heartfelt and so earnest, that never has it drawn one amused smile from his neighbours round himfor, in spite of his eccentricities and his decidedly nasty temper, he had been a most true and devoted husband to her, to her short life's end.

He had been fussy and irritable and very oneminded about most things all through his life, and probably will be so to the end, but to her, whom he had loved with all his soul, he was never irritable, never anything but loving and kind and gracious, and she had known and felt the difference he had placed between her and all the rest of the world. and loved him the more for it, and had died in his arms, as happily as one can die who leaves a husband half-frenzied for her loss, and three small girls behind her.

All his tender hold of her could not keep her back, however, and he buried her, silently, tearlessly-so tearlessly that the neighbours looking on said his heart was a stone. But it was only broken!

"Why are you so hard on them, then?" continues Mrs. Egerton, who, during her two years with them-the two years of her widowhood-has grown to love the girls very honestly. "I think them the best girls in the world, considering how beautiful they are. Ugly girls," says Mrs. Egerton thoughtfully, "are—well they, of course, are good or ought to be. But yours-Bertha's-"

"I know, I see. It is because they are beautiful I must look after Bertha's children," says Grace, in the low voice he always instinctively falls into when the love of his life is alluded to.

"But do you look after them? Is your way a wise one? You forbid them practically to see any man of any sort. And is that wise?"

"You wrong me there, Henrietta; they can see men, of sorts-everywhere. What I do object to is young men pervading the premises morning, noon, and night. My poor girl," with another sigh, "has left me these girls as her sole living memory of herself, and I feel bound to see they are kept out of mischief."

"That is very well as far as it goes. But surely Bertha would not wish to see her daughters nuns."

"Nuns! God forbid!" says the squire, who is a staunch Protestant. "But neither would she wish to see them married into poverty. And, therefore, I have set my face against their seeing any of these impecunious young men round here."

"Well, there I quite agree with you," says Mrs. Egerton. "None of the girls were meant for that sort of thing to judge by their ways-their looks. But all young men are not paupers and vagrants. There is Victor for example."

"Victor Mowbray! A mere dependant on his uncle."

"And heir to the title!"

"A barren honour. All the money goes to the other nephew, that disreputable Paul Swindon."

"Ah! that is what they say, but Lord Mowbray would surely not be so stupid as to leave his money away from the title-the name-and to a man so certain to make ducks and drakes of it."

"Who can say what any one will do; Mowbray himself told me before he last went abroad that Swindon was to be his heir. But as for the succession, that's a long way off," says the squire, comfortably. "Mowbray is a year younger than I am."

"But many years more infirm," says Mrs. Egerton, dreamily. "And Victor is the dearest boy. I have sometimes thought," growing even more dreamy, "that he and Madge-"

"What!" cries the squire furiously. "He and Madge. That idiotic boy and my girl! Look here, Henrietta," still boiling with rage, "I like you, you know-you're my poor Bertha's sister, you knowbut I'll stand no nonsense from you. I've asked

you to come here to look after my children, but if I thought you would allow anything like—like flirtations, I'd——" He pauses, choking.

"Yes? Go on," says Mrs. Egerton with a broad smile, "you would? Do go on, John."

"I'd be greatly surprised, and very much mistaken in my opinion of you," says the squire, climbing down a little, but still fuming. "Now once for all, Henrietta, is there anything between that jackanapes and Madge?"

"How absurdly in earnest you are over everything," says Mrs. Egerton, lifting her brows. "There is nothing, of course. A mere boy and girl like that! Nothing serious, of course."

"Serious! why that looks—as if——"

At this moment the door is thrown open, and someone in mad haste, and with the careless, graceful sweetness of youth, swings gaily round the Japanese screen and right into the middle of the room.

"Auntie, where are you? We've been hunting for you everywhere. Oh! papa! you here. I didn't know—I——"

CHAPTER II.

"Every spirit
This day hath made much work for tears."

"A lavish planet reigned when she was horn!"

SHE stops dead short, and a faint colour rises to her cheek. She looks a charming creature standing thus, a little fear, a little surprise, a little suppressed (ill suppressed) gaiety in her eyes.

"Yes, I am here," says the squire, angrily, "and" thumping the table as she turns away as if to leave the room, "you will stay here, if you please, and listen to a word from me. Your aunt there," pointing to the now guiltily flushed Mrs. Egerton, who instantly gets behind him, and begins to make frantic signs to Madge, who has fixed her with large reproachful eyes, "tells me——"

"No, John, no," from Mrs. Egerton.

"Gives me to understand, then, that there is some foolery going on between you and young Mowbray. Now I'll have nothing of the sort. If you think for a moment that I'll submit to a flirtation between you and a boy who may be cast adrift by his uncle any day, you—"

"Auntie! what have you been saying?" cries the girl, turning suddenly upon Mrs. Egerton, all the burning wrath of a young heart making her eyes ablaze.

"Oh nothing, nothing! Can't you trust me? Don't you know me?" cries poor Mrs. Egerton, wringing her hands in her distress. "Oh! go away, Madgie darling, and I'll explain to you afterwards."

"No. I'll hear it now," says Madge, obstinately. She is very handsome with her beautiful dark eyes and auburn hair, and her perfect mouth—a mouth a little too determined, perhaps, for a girl of eighteen. It is a delightful mouth, however, and full of possibilities. "What do you mean?" says she, turning to her father.

"I am glad you ask me," says he, testily; "that is straightforward, anyway. But I won't say anything beyond this: that I will permit no love-making between you and Victor Mowbray—you hear? You," looking at the young, mutinous face looking back at him in so strange a fashion, "understand?"

"Certainly I understand," says the girl, with a haughty movement of her beautiful head. "What I fail to understand is the word 'love-making.' There has never been—there never will be any love-making between me and Victor Mowbray, whatever"—she looks straight at Mrs. Egerton, and that poor innocent culprit feels scorched by the look—"Auntie may have told you."

With this she walks slowly to the screen again, and now round it, and out of the door,

"I think it abominable of you to have given me away like that," says Mrs. Egerton, her soul on fire and her eyes full of tears. "That poor child now believes I have betrayed her trust, whereas there was little or nothing to betray. Oh! the poor child's eyes!" Suddenly she makes an onslaught on him. "It's absurd the way you treat those girls; one would think they were babies still, creatures incompetent to lay out their own paths in life."

"That is just what I do think," says Grace, who understands every point of a horse, but is ignorant of the smallest knowledge of a girl's heart.

"Well, you will have to think differently very shortly," says Mrs. Egerton, with a touch of anger that sits most curiously upon her sunny, happy, usual manner. "Girls will be girls, and young men will be young men until the world comes to it's big overthrow; and I tell you this, that your girls were never made to sit in dark corners, or wear out their fingers over tapestry as our silly ancestors did."

"Not so silly either. They were gentlewomen in very truth. But what do you want to say now?"

"I want to say, that your girls are not only loving but lovable. And they must be allowed fair play."

"Fair play! They have that, goodness knows."

"They can wander round your woods, and go to occasional tennis parties; but to what does *that* amount? They go to parties, they meet people, yet they may not entertain them in turn."

"I shall never entertain again," says the squire, who, since his wife's death, has refused to give dinner parties, or luncheon parties, or any parties at all.

"Not on a grand scale," says Mrs. Egerton, who reverences his grief for his dead wife, but thinks he ought to give way a little when his daughters have grown to marriageable age. "But I think you ought, for the girls' sake and for your own too, be a little hospitable. Now these two young men that have just come to live here: the Brandes. Their father was an old friend of yours; don't you think you ought to show them some courtesy?"

"Colonel Brandes' boys?"

"Yes! And quite nice boys, too, I hear—in fact I know. One of them has come to live at 'The Elms,' his father's place, and the other at 'Sloes'—he is agent to his brother."

"They are twins, I think; I called last week on account of knowing their father, but they were out, providentially. Twins I believe they call themselves."

"My dear John, you must let them call themselves a better name than that. You must remember they are grandsons of the late Lord Sloane, and that they have been left very decently off by their father, the colonel (you know he died three years ago when the boys were in Egypt), and that the present Lord has no heir, and that probably—"

"Oh, probably, probably——" says the squire, irritably; "you are all for probabilities; and I am all for certainties. You would launch the girls in a quagmire of possibilities; I would see them

landed on dry ground. Therefore I say to you I won't have either Mowbray or these two new young men, these Brandes, coming bothering round here. Fellows playing tennis all day, and unsettling the girls' minds—fellows with no intentions!"

The squire rises testily to walk up and down the room.

"How on earth do you know that? Of course they have no intentions so far. They have not even seen the girls. You know Madge and Janie were out yesterday when they returned your call. I wonder," sarcastically, "you did call?"

"Of course I called. How could I do less? But to have them take advantage of that—a compliment merely to their dead father, my old friend—as a reason for running over here every other day to flirt with the girls. No, I set my face against that."

"You seem to think even more of your girls than I do," says Mrs. Egerton, who is now quite disgusted with him. "Are they so charming then, so superior to all the other girls round that every man you know is desirous of laying himself at their feet? For goodness sake, John, do be sensible, and don't make your children the laughing-stock of the county. I am quite thankful now that when those two young men called yesterday they saw only—"

"Who? who?"

"ATE!

"And a good thing too," says the squire, quite unimpressed by all her eloquence, "I hate philanderers,"

"Do you?" Mrs. Egerton is growing sarcastic.
"Philanderers sometimes marry, however; and, my dear John, there are few things so objectionable or so expensive in a family as an old maid."

"I don't see that."

"Don't you? It's a sort of slur upon the family anyway. Makes everybody think it is of no importance, or else that the girls aren't nice—or, well—lots of things."

"Stuff and nonsense!" sharply, "Hope you won't put that in the girls' heads. They are full-filled enough already of that sort of trash. Did these young Brandes say when they were coming again?"

"Well, they hinted-"

"Hinted! I wish I'd been here when they called, and I'd have given them to understand they are not wanted here."

"Then, my dear John, why did you call?"

"Not call! On the sons of my old friend! That was respect to his memory. It was all for him. But I meant the courtesy, the acquaintance to stop there. And," with a frown, "so it shall."

"I really wish you had explained all this before," says Mrs. Egerton, blandly, "because unfortunately, when these two lonely young men, who have only just come to the neighbourhood, and who know apparently nobody, explained to me the situation, I took pity on them, and asked them to come to tennis and afternoon tea the day after tomorrow."

"'Pon my word, Henrietta! 'pon my word," says the squire, angrily; "you take a great deal on yourself."

"I feel that, John," says Mrs. Egerton, who, however, doesn't seem in the least put out. "But it needn't happen again, though I assure you, John, you are entering on a very difficult road if you think you can make recluses of your girls. Poor Vincent! Of course—she——"

Mrs. Egerton stops, and a very genuine and sad sigh escapes her.

"Why d'ye call her foor Vincent," asks the squire with a sudden sharp anger, different from the irritability he has shown before; it is stronger and filled indeed with misery. "There isn't one of them can hold a candle to Vincent," says he almost violently.

"No, no," gently. All her anger has died away beneath his passion of sorrow. "We," soothingly, "all know that. Don't even the girls acknowledge it. Her beauty leaves all the others in the shade. But—but——"

It seems too cruel to explain the "but," and she grows silent.

"There is no one like her," says the squire in a sombre tone.

"I know, I know. But there are the others, John, and they must be considered. Madge and Janie; such pretty girls, too, if not so pretty as Vincent. Poor Vincent! And I warn you, John, that they won't be kept down!"

"Who wants to keep them down?" fiercely, "They can go about as much as any girls I know. Have I ever forbidden you to take them to all

these silly parties round here? though what on earth you all see in them—the same people, the same games always; tennis here, at this end, Aunt Sally over there, and in the round tent every one drinking tea and abusing their neighbours. That's what a tennis party comes to! And I don't care about tennis or gossip or anything else, all I say is —and I lay it down as law——" bringing his hand down again upon the sturdy oak table, that has been so accustomed to thumps for fifty years, that probably it laughs at this new one—" I wen't have young men coming here."

"That seems to be a favourite dictum of yours," says Mrs. Egerton, slowly—a little contemptuously. "Anyway, as I tell you, I have asked the two Brandes to take tea here on Thursday. I suppose your principles will not compel you to refuse so small a hospitality to the sons of your old friend?"

The squire fidgets, looks at her—looks back again. How like she is to his "poor sweetheart!"—and to Vincent.

"Well, this once," says he. "But mind you, I object to it all through, and the girls have more to think of than the young Brandes; their cousin is coming to-morrow, they should see to a room for her. Betty—was that the name?" He takes up the telegram again. "Yes, Betty O'Grady. She will be here to-morrow at seven. Remind me to send the carriage to meet her."

CHAPTER III.

"Youth is ever apt to judge in haste,
And lose the medium in the wild extreme."

To-MORROW has ripened into to-day—a lovely June day, all lights and shades and scented breezes. On the top of the hills beyond great foams of clouds are resting, and between them one can see the deep eternal blue of the sky behind.

The girls, however, are too busy over Betty's bedroom (the unknown Betty, who is to come this evening) to think much of the day's beauties—the beauties so well known to them as to have grown almost beyond loving. The saddest truth of many truths is this, that what we most know we least love.

But the girls, devoid of thought unnecessary to the bare moment, are busying themselves about the bedroom for the new guest. That is, they are fussing here and there, upsetting their maids, and dragging the smaller chairs and tables into impossible positions, and driving the servants mad. And Janie, the third girl, a slender, svelte creature of sixteen, with a pert nose (how she herself resents that nose) and hazel eyes, that, as her old nurse used to say, "were never made for the good of her soul," is placing delicately smelling bunches of sweet pea, got from the gardener, and heliotrope plucked from the houses, in the little vases on the dressing-table and chimney-piece.

"Not so many, Janie!" says Madge, who is standing back, surveying the room with the critical eye of the young mistress.

She is not the eldest, of course, but then—poor Vincent! What could she do?

"No, not so many, Janie!" She says it again, Janie having taken no notice of her first protest. As she speaks she turns away from a long-suffering maid, on whom she has been impressing that the coming Betty's room is not sufficiently dusted, and that she thinks the screen in the right-hand corner ought to be in the left.

"Not a bit too much," says Janie, who has a certain strength of her own, "And—oh, don't touch that screen, Brown," to the maid. "It is all right where it is. It hides that hideous wardrobe. I am sure," turning to Madge who is now intent on a curtain, "Betty will hate that wardrobe. I always did. Do you know I'm going to undertake Betty? She'll be of no sort of use to you, Madge, and I shall love to have her as a friend, so you need not bother about her. Betty and I are going to be chums; I feel it."

"Do you?" Madge looks amused. "Does Betty feel it, I wonder? Has it ever occurred to you that Betty may have a soul above a little frivolous chit like you?"

At this Janie, who is something of a hoyden still, flings a little water out of one of her flowervases at her, and Madge, dodging it successfully, beats a retreat.

Outside here, the sky is warm with sunshine, and the flowers, opened too soon by the splendid heat, are now hanging their lovely heads—tired before their time. Scarcely a breath of air disturbs the quiet of the hour, and from the low-lying lands a drowsy mist is rising—

"Earth putteth on the borrowed robes of heaven, And sitteth in a Sabbath of still rest." "Where are you going, Janie?" asks Mrs. Egerton, languidly, from her seat beneath the big chestnut on the lawn, as the girl, swinging a basket gaily, goes by her.

"To the wood to get some honeysuckle for Betty's room. I say, Aunty, I hope she'll be nice—don't you?"

"Of course I hope it," says Mrs. Egerton, doubtfully. "But Irish people, you know, are generally—I have only met three of them in my life, and they were all right, but I have heard that they are very—very—Well! You know!"

"I don't," says Janie, who is dreadfully young.

"Why, queer, you know, and uncultivated, and —wild! Especially when they come from the south, and the unknown Betty comes from the South of Ireland, doesn't she?"

"Yes, Cork." Janie pauses, and her rather saucy little nose, that looks as if somebody had put a finger on the tip of it when she was born, and made it square before it was quite formed, takes an upward turn. "Wild," repeats she, with ill-suppressed hope and a gleam of delight in her eye. "Oh! If only she will be wild!"

"I sincerely hope she won't be," says her aunt, laughing, "as I have got to look after the lot of you. I don't care about being responsible for more crimes than I can help." She laughs again as she administers what she fondly believes to be a rebuke, and is presently lost in her book once more.

But Janie goes afield, searching for honeysuckle here and there—in dusky dells and lighted hollows—that she may find wealth wherewith to still further adorn the room of her future chum.

It is so lovely to have someone coming to stay with them. Never, never has there been anyone yet. Father is so funny about things. And a girl—a friend. She is sure to be a friend; and her friend too; for Madge doesn't seem to care about her coming, and poor Vincent!

Ah; here is some honeysuckle; she scrambles up the high bank, plucks it and lays it almost tenderly in her basket. Is it not for the coming Betty? She will be a cousin too. That will bring them even closer. She has often heard of the O'Grady cousins, but never very much about them, except that there are a great many of them, and all girls except one boy. The heir. Thank goodness it isn't the heir who is coming. But if there are so many girls, perhaps Betty—Oh, no,

impossible. A Betty could never be an old girl, she must be young—her own age, and just the sort of girl she has been wishing to meet all her life. She will take her for long walks in the beautiful woods. Madge hates walking—and if father will giver her the bay cob, they will sometimes ride over the hills and far away. Perhaps—perhaps—who knows, she may be even allowed sometimes to share her room. Auntie might let her, and nurse wouldn't say a word, and what fun it would be to sleep with her. They could sit up half the night telling each other stories, and doing each other's hair, in fancy fashions.

And then there is the trout stream—of course she can fish. A girl from the country, from Ireland, can certainly fish. Ah! here is more honcy-suckle. But what a steep bank this time. Why does the pretty, stupid little thing choose such troublesome places to grow in? Oh! bother these briars.

A little stumble, a sudden sharp knowledge that she has no longer a place for the sole of her foot, a plunge forward, and she finds herself in the arms of a young man, who has come to a sudden and astonished halt at the foot of the bank.

CHAPTER IV.

"What makes your cheek like a warm white rose?"

"I HOPE you are not hurt?" says he, anxiously. He is tall and very handsomely built, with grey eyes, and hair that is nearly black. The eyes are small but full of life and meaning, and the hair (what the barber has left of it) is fine in texture, but it must be confessed that on the whole the man is ugly. Nothing on earth would redeem his nose, and his mouth, beyond doubt, is one of the largest on record. When he laughs it is perfectly abnormal, and as it takes a good deal of exercise in that way, its immense proportions are perpetually en Evidence.

"No—no, I think not; I'm sure not," says Janie, with a little gasp—some natural confusiou—and a great deal of suppressed wrath. Beast! What on earth brought him here at this moment of all others, to witness her discomfiture? She could have got on perfectly well without him; if the worst had come tothe worst, a fall would have done her no harm—so long as nobody saw it.

The sting lies here; he has seen it, or something approaching it; and will tell it to other people, of course. Who can he be? Somebody staying with the Courtenays, no doubt. They are always having young men to stay with them, and he'll go home and tell the girls there, and they will laugh, and

Meantime her despised rescuer has been talking vigorously. She hasn't heard a syllable he has said, so wrapt is she in her own angry forebodings, but now some words meet her car.

"That's the worst of girls, you know," he is saying to her, evidently with admonition in his tone. "They never know where they are going."

Janie lifts her eyes to his, wrath is burning in her soul. Really this is too much. One would think she was still a mere schoolgirl—instead of being nearly seventeen. *The idea!*

"I knew where I was going," said she, with considerable dignity.

"Did you?" said he, and then as the sudden remembrance comes to him of where she did go—right into his arms—a sense of amusement overcomes him, and he gives way to mirth—subdued, indeed, but of a distinct character.

"Yes," returns Janie, with increased dignity, and a slight frown; "I was gathering honeysuckle for my cousin's room. She will arrive this evening. May I ask," severely this, "if you know where you are going?"

The childishness of the retaliation tickles him immensely. "Well, I hope so," says he. He pauses and smiles. There is a little swing in his voice—a sweetness, a roughness. What is it? Again she wonders who he is. Where has he come from? Not an Englishman certainly. How strange his accent is! How oddly he frames some of his words—drawing out some of the syllables and shortening others—and the voice going up and down in a sort of monotonous music! Oh! not an Englishman certainly, but quite as certainly not a foreigner. She has never been to Ireland, or she would have recognised that good old touch of the brogue at once.

"However," continues he, candidly, "I confess that though I believe I am on the right path to my destination, doubt has attended me at every step. I am a stranger in a strange land."

"Oh!" says Janie, who is beginning to grow interested.

"A wretched fact, isn't it? But it remains. Yesterday for the first time I set foot in England, and I had hoped that the people I am coming to stay with, would have sent to the train to neet me."

"Oh! they wouldn't," says Janie, promptly, thinking of the Courtenays, who are proverbial for forgetting to do the things they ought to do; "they never remember anything."

"Is that so? I had understood otherwise; however, you are right so far. There was no one to meet me. They had evidently forgotten my existence, or perhaps—the notice of my coming was short—they never got the telegram. I felt a little stranded on the platform, especially as there was nothing to be begged, borrowed, or stolen in the way of a vehicle. So I determined to tramp it, and a friendly porter gave me the right direction."

"The friendly porter gave you the wrong one, however," said Janie. She pauses a moment and then is unable to resist it. "After all," says she, "you are as bad as a girl, you don't know where you are going either!"

If she had dreamt of withering him with this remark, she finds herself mightily mistaken. Had it been the biggest joke on record (perhaps he took it as one) he could not have been more amused.

"That's an awfully unkind cut," says he, "but it supports me in my first view. It makes you more of a girl than ever, girls are always unkind, you know,"

"Ah! that shows how little you know about them," says Janie, with a contemptuous shrug of her shoulders. She turns away with a faint salute, and goes down the wooded pathway at a tremendous pace.

"I daresay you are right," says the young man hurrying after her; "in fact I am sure you are. And, anyway, if there is a doubt I feel positive you are the exception to the rule. At all events, it is in your power to prove it now. You can be kind to me. You," hopefully, "are evidently a resident in this neighbourhood, and can give me an idea as to where I am."

"Certainly," says Janie. It is her usual formula. She speaks politely but coldly, and stands still until he comes up with her.

"Oh! thank you," says he. "The reason I trouble you is, that you told me a little while ago

that the porter had sent me on the wrong road. This, then, is not the right way to go?"

"Oh! no. You must go that way," pointing in the opposite direction to where she is going.

"That way? Yet the porter-"

"He made a mistake, I suppose. Anyway, that is the shortest path to 'Courtenay Hall.'"

"To where?"

"'The Hall," very distinctly.

"But I don't want to go to 'The Hall.' I want to go to 'The Court.'"

Janie stands still and stares at him, her lovely eyes like saucers.

" What ?" says she. He stares back at her.

"Well, there is a place called 'The Court,' isn't there?" asks he, but with some slight trepidation in his tone. "You know it?"

"Yes," The answer comes faintly. To ask her if there is such a place as "The Court." If she knows it? "Yes, I know it. I—why, I——"

"Oh! that's all right," he breaks in. "It is there I am going—on a visit to Mr. Grace. You know him perhaps?"

Janie stops dead short.

"I'm sure you are not," says she. "My—Mr. Grace hates young men."

"Good heavens!" says the stranger. The imposter. Janie has now, at once, made up her mind about him. An imposter he is!

"You are certainly not going to 'The Court,'" says she, standing up to him quite valiantly. Afterwards she said with regard to this moment that—"But that's another story."

"I certainly am," returns he, calmly. "You evidently know very little of 'The Court' people, or you would understand how it is."

"Know little of 'The Court' people! If anyone should know of them, I should," says she, haughtily. "I myself am one of 'The Court' people. My father is Mr. Grace. Now—now I can see what an imposter you are."

She looks to see him go down beneath this, but he holds up uncommonly well. There isn't so much as a sign of a blush about him, and the only touch of grace lies in the fact that he doesn't say a word. He stands silent, as if thinking. "Thinking of confession perhaps," says Janie to herself. He wants time to confess. After all, poor creature, she has been a little hard on him. Time is given him, however, and now he opens his mouth. "At

last," thinks Janie, "I am going to hear a full, true confession from someone." She feels quite proud. A criminal brought to justice, and by her! She looks at the wretched man, prepared to hear his humble acknowledgment of his crime—ready to condone it.

"You can speak!" says she, quite grandly.

He takes advantage of her kindness.

"My dear cousin," says he, "I am delighted to meet you."

Janie's face at this moment would be worthy a painter's brush. She moves back a little from him, as one would move from something mad, and regards him with unkindly eyes. She had been quite ready to forgive him—to help him to escape—(many of those imposters, father has often said, are got up just like gentlemen), but this abominable touch of audacity—

"Your-your cousin!" gasps she.

"Yes, I think so"—quite calmly, and with an amused smile. "I feel quite sure of it. Now that I look at you I can see the likeness. You are very like Muriel. She has got hair like yours, and a nose. Her nose is the image of yours!"

This is too much!

Janie's nose, as has been said, is a sore point with her. Vincent's is pure Greek, Madge's irreproachable, but hers—the term "nez retroussée" is abhorrent to her.

"I don't know your sister Muriel," says she with a flash of anger, "and" (most uncivilly), "I dont want to know her, or her nose" (this very distinctly) "either, and I think it is very impertinent of you, a stranger, to speak to me of my nose at all, or of anything else for the matter of that; and as to your saying you are a cousin of mine—"

 daughter of Mr. Grace, of 'The Court.' I'm very sorry for the mistake I have made."

He lifts his hat, and makes a movement as if to go; then stops short, struck by something in her

"Are you sure you aren't?" asks he.

"I am sure I am," returns she. And then, as if in spite of things, they both laugh.

"But who are you?" asks she.

"Why, I'm Batty O'Grady," says he, quietly. "My father sent yours a wire yesterday. Did he get it?"

He waits for an answer, but Janie is too full of a great and new astonishment to answer him at once. When at last the truth comes quite home to her, she says slowly:

"So you are-Betty?"

"I'm not, indeed. I'm Batty," says he, laughing. "Bartholomew is my full name, and I always feel a little guilty about it. Who could be expected to say all those syllables straight off at a minute's notice. But that is beside the question. I'm Batty. That's settled, I hope—eh? But you? Are you Vincent, or Madge, or Janet? You see I know all your names, so I'm not quite so much such an imposter as you thought. Well, which is it?"

He waits, but Janie says nothing.

"Oh! look here; I do call this mean! I've given myself quite away, and you won't even say if you're Vincent, or Madge, or—"

"Janie," says she quickly. "Yes, I'm Janie."

"Then, I'm on the right road after all, and I did know where I was going, you see, and that stupid porter—— Look here, I owe that fellow something, don't I?"

"Oh! of course you can make fun of me if you like," says Janie, shrugging her shoulders. "I've laid myself open to it. But——"

"Well, I'm not an imposter anyway; you must acknowledge that."

"Yes; but you're not Betty either, and I am very sorry for that!"

(To be continued.)



AUTHORS' COUNTIES.

I.—KENT: CHARLES DICKENS

By BENJAMIN TAYLOR, F.R.G.S.

THERE were no mile-stones on the Dover Mr. F.'s Aunt, when Cæsar, after the Battle of Barham Downs, marched on the Thames. The Rev. Francis Vine, who has laboriously traced the footsteps of the great Roman in Kent, locates the first encampment after that battle at Bapchild (which he identifies with the ancient Durolevum), and the next encampment twelve miles further on at Rochester (Durobrovis). Here Cæsar crossed the Medway, and concerning the marshlands thereabout Mr. Roach Smith, in his archæological retrospections of the neighbourhood, has written: "These marshes are an interesting study for the geologist as well as the antiquary. When the Romans inhabited and worked the land it lay high and dry, and the Medway must have been confined within comparatively narrow limits. It was probably some time after the Romans had left before the sea began to make inroads and submerge hundreds of acres."

But interesting as the country may be for the geologist and the antiquary, the average reader, or Mr. John Morley's "Plain Man," finds in it interest of another sort. It is of less moment to him that the modern road from Dover to London runs upon the Roman military via (which again was constructed upon the line of the ancient British road, such as it was), than that it bears upon it the invisible yet indelible footprints of Charles Dickens. The Land of Kent has been glorified in modern eyes by one who cared as little for ancient history as for medieval romance. As Scott made the Tweed, so Dickens made the Medway, and Gadshill Place may, in a manner, be regarded as the Londoner's Abbotsford.

The weirdness and desolation of these marshes impressed the imagination of Dickens profoundly. Our illustration gives some idea of their characteristics, but one must see them to appreciate the hold they took upon Dickens' fancy. We cannot perceive the fates and figures emerging from them as he did, but neither can we see the Thames with the eyes of Turner. Dreary and unromantic in the extreme, indeed, some may think these marshes which had so great a fascination for one who troubled himself not with the fact that Roman bricks and pottery had been found in them, to prove that once upon a time they were dry land. Dry land they can never be again while the spirit of Dickens pervades them.

How dark and bleak they were on that eventful afternoon when poor little Pip came across the limping man with the leg-iron, who expressed such dreadful intentions with regard to Pip's heart and liver! The marshes were just a long black horizontal line as Pip stopped to see the hungry convict picking his way across; and the river was just another horizontal line, but narrower and not so black; and the sky was a row of long, angry, . red and black lines. Only two upright things were visible in the whole prospect-two black uprights in that horizontal region-a beacon and a gibbet. Then how they were swathed in damp, raw mist the next morning, when terrified yet tender-hearted little Pip stole out with the mince-meat and Mr. Pumblechook's pork-pie, and the brandy in the liquorice-water bottle, to meet the awful man in grey, with the iron on his leg, near the Battery. And how alarming they were when at nightfall he went over them again with Joe Gargery and the file of soldiers, stumbling along through the bitter sleet and the



wind and sleet, stared angrily as if they held us responsible for both annoyances; but except these things, and the shudder of the dying day in every blade of grass, there was no break in the bleak stillness of the marshes."

Years later, as we know, Pip went out alone one night on to "the meshes" (as they call them thereabouts), in response to the mysterious summons from Old Orlick. That night, which was so nearly his last, was dark as he left the town, but the moon rose as he made his way to the little sluice-house by the limekiln on the marshes. Beyond the dark line of them there was a ribbon of clear sky, but hardly enough to hold the full moon, which quickly ascended into a mountain-pile of clouds. In the distance Pip could see the lights of the Hulks, and on the spits of sand seaward, but "there was a melancholy wind, and the marshes were very dismal."

We find them again and again in the novels, so powerfully did the weird desolation of these flatands appeal to Dickens' imagination.

If Gadshill is the Abbotsford of the Dickens country, then is Rochester Castle its Melrose. Without moonlight effects it is an impressive pile of grey stone, keeping watch and ward from an eminence over the town and river. The feeling it gives one is that of steadfastness—men may come and men may go in the streets and byeways at its feet, but its majesty endures. In the turmoil

of life it seems to have no part, and its foundations are unmoved, while Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan

and Life Insurance, United Grand Junction, Lirriper and Jackman Great Norfolk Parlour Line, and United Metropolitan Improved Hot Muffin and Crumpet Bakery and Punctual Delivery Companies, are launched, floated, and cast away in the troubled recesses of liquidation.

"Magnificent ruin!" said Mr. Augustus Snodgrass, with all the poetic fervour that distinguished him, when they came in sight of the fine old castle.

"What a study for an antiquarian!" were the very words which fell from Mr. Pickwick's mouth, as he applied his telescope to his eye.

"Ah! fine place" (said Mr. Alfred Jingle), "glorious pile—frowning walls—tottering arches—dark nooks—crumbling staircases—old cathedral, too—carthy smell—pilgrims' feet worn away the old steps—little Saxon doors—confessionals like money-taker's boxes at theatres—queer customers these monks—Popes and Lord Treasurers and all sorts of old fellows with great red faces and broken noses, turning up every day—buff jerkins, too—match-locks—Sarcophagus—fine—place—old legends, too—strange stories—capital."

It has been said of Dickens that his work and sympathies were absolutely alien to all that mediæval world which this old castle typifies, and yet who can measure the unconscious influence of scenery upon the imaginative mind? If Dickens did not weave a romance out of this pile such as Scott would have done, yet he clustered some of his best remembered scenes and characters around it.

Do you not remember what Mr. Pickwick saw, as on the beautiful morning after the famous review on the Lines, where the great man lost his hat and the world found the immortal Fat Boy, he leaned over the balustrade of Rochester Bridge? "On the



ROCHESTER CASTLE.

left lay the ruined wall, broken in many places, and in some overhanging the narrow beach below in rude and heavy masses. Huge knots of seaweed hung upon the jagged and pointed stones, trembling in every breath of wind, and the green ivy clung mournfully round the dark and ruined battlements. Behind it rose the ancient castle, its towers roofless, and its massive walls crumbling, but telling as proudly of its own might and strength as when, seven hundred years ago, it rang with the clash of arms, or resounded with the noise of feasting and revelve. On

either side the banks of the Medway, covered with cornfields and pastures, with here and there a windmill or a distant church, stretched away as far as the eye could see, presenting a rich and varied landscape, rendered more beautiful by the changing shadows which passed swiftly across it,

as the thin and half-formed clouds skimmed away in the light of the morning sun. The river, reflecting the clear blue of the sky, glistened and sparkled as it flowed noiselessly



water with a clear and liquid sound, as the heavy but picturesque boats glided slowly down the stream."

A rich and varied landscape, indeed, as one sees it to-day, and as our artist shows. Here, for instance, is a scene on the road by the fields from Rochester to Maidstone. Here, too, is a view down a lane leading from the back of Gadshill Place, along which Dickens must himself have often walked to Cobham, and which was surely the road taken by Mr. Pickwick, when, accompanied by Mr. Winkle and Mr. Snodgrass, he went in search of the love-stricken Tupman. It was after the pursuit of Jingle, and a cloud hung over the Pickwickians as over idyllic Dingley Dell, but it was a delightful walk for all that on a pleasant June day. They pushed their way through a deep and shady wood, cooled by a light wind and enlivened by the song of birds, where the ivy and the moss crept in thick clusters over the old trees, and the soft green turf overspread the ground like

a silken mat. Then they emerged upon an open park in which stood an ancient Elizabe-

than Hall, with long vistas of stately oaks and elms on every side, herds of deer cropping the fresh grass, and occasionally a startled hare scouring with the speed of the shadows of the light clouds which swept across the sunny

landscape. It not by this particular lane they went, at least Dickens often paced beneath these arching oaks and gazed with delight on the vista of wooded hills and Kentish garden-vales beyond.

That "ancient hall" displaying the quaint and picturesque architecture of Elizabeth's time—do we not see it again, under less favourable aspects, in "Great Expectations"? There it figures as Satis House, and there Miss Havisham sat in her bridal dress, year in, year out, without seeing the light of day, and with all the clocks stopped

at twenty minutes to nine—the hour at which she received the heartless letter when she was dressing for her wedding. There is, no doubt, another Satis House—a real one—in Rochester, of which tradition says that the name was bestowed by Queen Elizabeth, when she was the guest of Richard Watts, whose benefactions will ever keep his memory green on the Medway. But our Restoration House is the Satis House of Miss Havisham—unique in its way and as well-preserved a specimen of Elizabethan red-brick architecture as one can find anywhere—as much a house and home still as when it gave shelter to doublet and hose, farthingale and ruffles.

Pip, however, did not think much of it when Uncle Pumblechook took him there one morning after much arithmetic and little breakfast. Miss Havisham's house, as it appeared to him, was of



old brick and dismal, and had a great many iron bars to it. Some of the windows had been walled up, and all the lower ones were rustily barred; and there was a barred courtyard in front. How relieved he was to get through the bars, conducted by a young lady "who was very pretty and seemed very proud," and to leave Uncle Pumblechook and his interminable conundrums in mental arithmetic behind! The Manor House, the pretty young lady called it, whereupon inquired Pip:

"Is that the name of this house, miss?"

"One of its names, boy."

"It has more than one, then, miss?"

"One more; its other name is Satis, which is Greek, or Latin, or Hebrew, or all three—or all one to me—for enough."

"Enough House! That's a curious name, miss."



"Yes," she replied, "but it meant more than it said. It meant, when it was given, that whoever had this house could want nothing else. They must have been easily satisfied in those days, I should think."



Chatham, and Brompton, may find a few items to correct in Mr. Pickwick's notes on these four towns, and a few also to endorse. The immortal antiquarian noted that their principal productions appeared to be "soldiers, sailors, Jews, chalk, shrimps, officers, and dockyard men." The commodities on sale he found to be chiefly marinestores, hard-bake, apples, flat-fish, and oysters. The streets, he said, presented a lively

And so Pip thought when he was shown downstairs, to be regaled after his efforts at "play" in the lower regions. "A deserted place down to the pigeon house in the brewery vard, which had been blown crooked on its pole by some high wind, and would have made the pigeons think themselves at sea, if there had been any pigeons there to be rocked by it. But there were no pigeons in the dove-cot, no horses in the stable, no pigs in the stye, no malt in the store-house, no smells of grains and beer in the copper or the vat. All the





and animated appearance, owing to the conviviality of the military, and his philanthropic mind delighted in the spectacle of these gallant men staggering along under the influence of an overflow both of animal and ardent spirits. Happily "the cheap and innocent amusement for the boy population" thus



afforded, has found other substitutes, and there are other improvements of which Mr. Pickwick, as he left us, would cordially approve. The consumption of tobacco, he noted, was very great, but in the geniality of his soul he cheerfully admitted that the smell which pervaded the streets must be exceedingly delicious to those who are fond of smoking. Then, while a superficial traveller might object to the dirt which was a leading characteristic of the streets, "to those who view it as an indication of traffic and commercial prosperity it is truly gratifying."

Dirt, however, is no longer a leading characteristic, although, like all towns, each of them, no doubt, has more matter in a wrong place than will be permissible when the Social Utopists have succeeded in sand-papering society.

Our view of Strood is taken from the foot of the castle walls, and the arch of the new bridge one sees replaces the old stone one over which David Copperfield trudged, footsore and weary, on his journey to Dover, when he ran away from Murdstone and Grimby's in search of Miss Betsy Trotwood. Here David, leaning over the parapet, as one does to-day, would see the same placid waters, and away beyond, the hills of Higham and Strood and Gadshill, with their sentinel-like windmills

serving as land-marks. It may be a prosaic enough spot for those to whom a primrose is only a riverside flower, but with the setting sun touching up with colour here a gable and there a quay, and throwing a kindly shadow over the clustered houses, there is enough beauty for those with eyes to see. There are nobler streams than the Medway, no doubt, but seen in the twilight from the Strood esplanade as in our picture, it has quite a charm of its own.

Very little of it, however, could poor David see on that weary Sunday, when after three-and-twenty miles of plodding on the Dover Road, after the loss of his box and half-guinea, he reached the bridge. "I see myself as evening closes in," he says, "coming over the bridge at Rochester footsore and tired, and eating bread that I had bought for supper (out of the sale of his waistcoat). One or two little houses with the notice 'Lodgings for Travellers' hanging out had tempted me, but I was afraid of spending the few pence I had, and was even more afraid of the vicious looks of the trampers I had met or overtaken. I sought no shelter, therefore, but the sky, and toiling into Chatham-which in that night's aspect is a mere dream of chalk and drawbridges, and mastless ships in a muddy river, roofed like Noah's Arks-crept at last upon a sort of grassgrown battery, overhanging a lane where a sentry was walking to and fro. Here I lay down, near a cannon, and happy in the society of the sentry's footsteps."

Poor David! But he wouldn't be a boy if he did not pause on the bridge as he crossed, to lean his arms on the parapet, and gaze down at the flowing waters. And, doubtless, the sight refreshed and soothed him—though he does not say so.

A volume might be written about the inns of Dickens, but herewe can refer only to the "Maypole," that place of entertainment, of which Mr. John Willet was the landlord, in the days of Barnaby Rudge. Do we not all know it? "The 'Maypole' was an old building with more gable ends than a lazy man would care to count on a sunny day; huge zigzag chimneys, out of which it seemed as though even smoke could not choose but come in more than naturally fantastic shapes, imparted to it in its tortuous progress; and vast stables, gloomy, ruinous and empty. The place was said to have been built in the days of King Henry VIII., and there was a legend not only that Queen Elizabeth had slept there

one night while upon a hunting excursion; but that next morning while standing on a mounting-block before the door, with one foot in the stirrup, the Virgin Monarch had then and there boxed and cuffed an unlucky page for some neglect of duty."

Whether or not Good Queen Bess ever beheld it, the "Maypole" was "really an old house, a very old house, perhaps as old as it claimed to be. Its windows were old diamond-pane lattices, its floors were sunken and uneven, its ceilings blackened by the hand of time, and heavy with massive beams. Over the doorway was an ancient porch, quaintly and grotesquely carved; and here on summer evenings the more favoured customers smoked and drank—ay, and sang a good song too, sometimes—reposing on two grim-looking high-backed settles, which, like the twin dragons of some fairy tale, guarded the entrance to the mansion."

It was weather-beaten, and the deep dark bricks had grown yellow and discoloured with age, the sturdy timbers had decayed, and the swallows built their nests in the chimneys of the disused rooms. But it was hale and hearty for all that, with many years of life in it then (as now). And such a bar!the very snuggest, cosiest, and completest bar that ever the wit of man devised or imagined. "Such amazing bottles in old oaken pigeon-holes-such sturdy little Dutch kegs, ranged in rows on shelves -so many lemons hanging in separate nets, and forming the fragrant grove suggestive, with goodly loaves of snowy sugar stowed away hard by, of punch idealised beyond all mortal knowledge-such closets, such presses, such places for putting things away in hollow window-seats, all crammed to the throat with eatables, drinkables, or savoury condiments; lastly, and to crown all, as typical of the immense resources of the establishment and its defiances to all visitors to cut and come again, such a stupendous cheese!"

At least, so it was before the rioters came and wrecked the old house. But, as our artist shows, it is still a remarkably fine old wayside inn. The baywindow on the second floor in the centre belongs to the famous Chester Room. It stands to-day as it did a hundred years ago—an ancient hostelry of the good old times, with fine old oak panels and carved mantelpieces, and quaint old chairs and wonderful tables—lighted at both ends by fine old lattice-paned windows. No wonder it struck the



THE "MAYPOLE" INN.

fancy of Dickens, who clothed its old framework with a new interest.

What memories does the mention of Gadshill call up! Here, perchance, is the very spot on which the Prince and Poins set upon the pot-valiant Falstaff, and drove him roaring from the field—leaving his booty behind him. On the right of our picture is the "Falstaff Inn," and what further proof of identity does the sentimental traveller need? He wants none, at any rate, with regard to the house on the left, which Dickens has immortalised by his life and work there. That great group of cedars on the right are doubtless the trees to which Dickens refers in one of his letters, as having enchanted him in his childhood. They are not, however in the grounds of Gadshill Place, but on the opposite side of the road.

Gadshill Place itself is not exactly an ideal dwelling. With every disposition in the world to do so, one finds some difficulty in regarding it with the admiration which Dickens felt for it, From the material point of view, it is just about as uninteresting-looking as any common place country-house can be. But we do not look upon it as a mere erection of bricks and mortar. Even as it impressed the boyish imagination of Dickens, and became the "place beautiful" of his fife-dreams, so to the Dickensian pilgrim in this country it is a palace of enchantment. To the novelist, as to the poet, things are not always what they seem.

The country around is very lovely, with an endless succession of wooded hills and valleys. These woods and valleys are haunted by the memories of mediæval knights and monks, of jovial barons and brawling soldiers; of merry princes and highwaymen, of jesting Poins and blustering Falstaff. Yet mingling with historic and Shakespearian figures in mail and jerkin, one's gaze rests with more loving regard upon the forms in more modern garb—of Pickwick and Tupman, and Wardle and David Copperfield, and the rest of the moving throng with which the genius of Dickens has peopled this part of merrie England.



PERFUMES.

By J. SUTHERLAND.



HE dainty and, it might be added, deceitful art of perfumery, finds its raw material in the most likely and unlikely places and

substances. The south of Europe supplies flowers, notably the neighbourhood of Cannes and Nice, where certain kinds are cultivated by the acre for the sake of their scents. Nature favours this region as a flower-garden. On the mild sea-coast grows the delicate cassia that can scarcely bear a breath, while at the foot of the mountains violets are sweeter than if reared in the valleys which produce the orange, tuberose, and mignonette marvellously perfect. However, lavender is an exception, that grown at Mitcham and Wallington in England being no less than eight times as valuable as what comes from France or Italy. The lavender from the important distilleries, situated at the latter place, always take precedence in the market over any other; the perfection of this perfume is realised by a visit to Mr. Carter, chemist, of Wallington, who has made a speciality of the subject.

Perfumes are principally procured from the vegetable kingdom, and as different parts of plants are used, some supply more than one kind. The root of orris and vitivert is the source drawn upon; the stem of cedar, rosewood and sandal; the leaves of thyme, mint and patchouli; the blossom of roses, violets and others; the seed of the Tonquin bean, and the caraway, and the bark of cinnamon. The more delicate odours, as might be supposed, are derived from flowers. Certain flowers, however, defy every attempt to extract their perfumes, and all that can be done in such cases is to imitate them, by combinations of other scents, sometimes

of animal as well as of vegetable origin. This is successfully accomplished in almost every instance. The musk-deer and the musk-rat supply musk, while ambergris, which sells for about one hundred and thirty shillings per ounce, was used for some time before its exact nature could be ascertained. The first found, being cast up by the sea on the shore, was from its appearance supposed to be the gum of a tree washed down by rivers. Subsequently some of the substance was discovered in the sperm whale, and this gave rise to the curious notion that the animal had a fondness for the equally curious gum. Instead of ambergris being swallowed by the whale, it was ultimately demonstrated to be a morbid secretion produced in the intestines of the whale itself. In short, ambergris, one of the most valuable perfumes, is a product of disease. Unadulterated, it is too strong to be altogether pleasant to one's sense of smell, but combined with other scents, it has an excellent effect, and gives them permanence.

There are several methods employed for extracting the perfumes of plants, according to their nature, and the parts in which the perfumes are contained.

Distillation, one of the principal methods, is resorted to in the case of lavender, cloves, herbs, seeds, and certain flowers, the odours of which are capable of withstanding heat. Only the coarser kinds of flowers can bear the ordeal, and therefore blossoms are more often treated by maceration.

This, a second method, is extensively employed, although likely to strike the uninitiated as peculiar. It depends on the absorbent properties of animal fat. A quantity of the finest purified beef-suet, along with lard, is melted and put into a porcelain pan, which must be scrupulously clean, and then the flowers to be macerated are thrown in. They are allowed to remain from twelve to fortyeight hours, and, when exhausted, the liquid fat is strained and fresh flowers added. The process is repeated again and again, until the desired strength of perfume has been obtained. The fat afterwards goes under the name of pomatum. Perfumed oils are made in the same manner, by using the finest olive oil instead of suet and lard.

Another plan for extracting the breath of fairy flowers requires more patience and skill than any of the preceding methods. While the most important, it is attended by so much tedium as to render its adoption in this country comparatively uncommon. Known under the name of enfleurage, it resembles maceration in that the agency which appropriates and retains the perfume is either fat or oil. Shallow frames of glass receive a thin layer of clarified fat; flowers are then added, after which the frames are piled one upon another, so that fat and flowers occupy so many sealed cells, thus preventing any escape of perfume. When that of one set of flowers has been absorbed, a fresh lot is substituted, and so they are changed from time to time until the fat receives the standard strength. In using oil, coarse cotton cloths, saturated with the finest the olive can produce, are laid on wire-gauze frames, and strewed with flowers. After these have been replaced by others as often as necessary, the cloths are laid under a screw press, to wring the perfumed oil from them. Should spirituous extracts be desired, the perfumed oil or fat is put into alcohol, and, after being left for a time, taken out again, when the perfume all remains behind. Pomatums take their distinguishing name from the flower used, or, it may be, a combination of flowers, to imitate some other unamenable to the art. For instance, the orange flower macerated in pomade makes orange-flower pomatum. The same blossom, when chopped up very fine and put into rarified spirits, becomes one of the most valuable bases in perfumery, passing, with slight modifications, for sweet pea, magnolia, and other favourites. The orange tree furnishes three different and distinct perfumes, while most flowers give two, according to the mode of preparation. The odoriferous products of the orange tree, however, are of special account, for they enter into more preparations than that of any other plant. This tree is grown at Cannes principally for pomatum purposes, but at Nice the flowers are mostly distilled and made into handkerchief bouquets. Cassia, which is extensively grown at Cannes, combines well with orange flower as well as with rose, tuberose, and vanilla. Although too sickly sweet to be pleasant alone, it is greatly used in forming combinations. Bergamot, an essential oil obtained by expression from the rind of a species of citron, bears an almost

equally good character for harmony in the company of others. It forms an ingredient of most essences, notably the Ess bouquet. Like many of the best perfumes, it is not particularly pleasant by itself, but when combined with orange, musk, or other fixing scents, an irresistible fragrance is produced. It should be kept in a cool dark place, and in a properly stoppered bottle, otherwise it soon deteriorates. With the exception of extract of rose, all other perfumes show a similar tendency, and the purer they are, the more susceptible they become to what happens to be in their case the unfavourable influences of light and warmth.

Among fixing or permanence-giving scents the principal are ambergris, musk, vitivert, vanilla, and orris. The last is much used in dentrifices, and indeed in perfumery generally. It enters frequently into combinations in imitation of other flowers. Some of the greatest favourites, strangely enough, are unavailable for the perfumer's purposes, but they can be all imitated with one exceptionjasmine. It defies art, although in the East and elsewhere perfumes have been studied for ages. The East is emphatically the land of the rose, Kizanlik in Roumelia, and the valleys of Cashmere supplying the attar gal of renown, Cannes and Grasse coming a long way behind with Provence roses, which, fine as they are in their way, bear no comparison to the former. The otto of roses is obtained by distilling the fresh flowers with water and afterwards skimming the otto from the surface of the water. Oil of rose is also obtained by maceration in oil.

Spurious imitations of perfumes abound to a far greater extent than might be suspected. Myrtle is rarely genuine, and magnolia too expensive to be so. Sweet-briar and eglantine, again, can only be represented by something else, for no process has vet been discovered whereby these delicate odours may be extracted and preserved. Spirituous extracts of rose pomade, of flower of orange, neroli cil-another preparation from the orange-and verbena, when skilfully combined, give a very good imitation of both. Nearly all lilies have the fault of being altogether too powerful alone, as well as being too self-assertive to blend harmoniously when combined with other flowers. Therefore they are counterfeited, the lilv of the valley in a wonderful manner by a compound of vanilla, jasmine, extract of tuberose, and essential oil of almonds. Wall-flower, clover-pink, and sweet-pea decline so persistently to part with their perfumes that they are represented by proxy. After their bodies have passed away, they scorn the ghostly part of haunting ball-rooms and such like places in spirit. As in colours certain only harmonise with others, so in perfumes. Sets of particular kinds are consequently used together, and with slight modification they may be made to yield almost any result. Orange flower, cassia, tuberose, vanilla, violet, rose, jasmine, orris, vitivert, with musk and ambergris, are the principal ingredients in most perfumes.

Tuberose and jasmine make stephanotis, while mignonette, honeysuckle and heliotrope simply give their names to other combinations. Cassia, essential oil of almonds, tuberose and orris form perhaps three-fourths of the so-called "violet" essence, It might not sell as well, but it would have as sweet a smell under any other name. Essence of violets, however, may be obtained at special places by paying a special price; but in this, as in many other cases, a satisfactory imitation is so much easier to produce that deception is the rule in the art of perfumery.

A NEGLECTED ART.

By LADY JEPHSON.

If there be one thing more than another which is needful for the health and consequent happiness of mankind, that desideratum is good cookery. On the preparation and proper combination of food depend, to a large extent, our state of body and mind. Few can be unprejudiced, even-tempered, and cheerful when undergoing the torments of dyspepsia. It is impossible to be light-hearted and optimistic when afflicted with indigestion.

"The weeping pessimist that's allus' taken blue,
An' paintin' up his troubles with a cemetery hue,"

owes the largest share of those troubles (if he only knew it) to the state of his liver. Pessimism is generally the outcome of dyspepsia; and contentment and optimism are consequent on a state of perfect health. There is sound philosophy, if a lack of originality, in the oft-quoted "Mens sana in corpore sano"; and the parable of Menenius Agrippa is as applicable a one to the nineteenth century as ever it was in the sixth century B.C.

Yet, though a knowledge of chemistry, physiology, and hygiene (all noble sciences), are necessary to the proper art of cookery, this branch of learning is both neglected and despised. Girls, with absolutely no musical gifts, waste years of their lives over pianos; or, without any artistic bias, are doomed to draw from the "flat" or from

"life," and set to copy masterpieces for which they have neither appreciation nor understanding. Cookery is considered derogatory and beneath the acquirement of a lady, and yet, strangely enough, everyone recognises its importance. Weightier issues lie with it than with even the sympathetic rendering of Bach, or the correct copying of a Botticelli. Husbands are sad Goths, and a good dinner daintily served appeals more to the majority of them than the finest pre-Raphaelite picture ever painted. Mothers are universally credited with the earnest desire of seeing their daughters comfortably established in life with husbands and homes; nevertheless, who among them ever thinks of preparing these daughters for the state of life to which they are called! Day after day poor young girls enter upon the duties and responsibilities of married life utterly and entirely unprepared for them. Instruction and years of training are bestowed upon all other branches of knowledge before proficiency is expected, but housekeeping (like Dogberry's ideas of reading and writing) is supposed to come "by nature."

The newly-made wife, who in these days of higher education can often construe difficult passages of Virgil, and has left the *Pons Asinorum* far behind her, is utterly at sea as to the number of pounds of meat per head her household should, in reason, consume weekly. She, of course, is deeply

read in Tolstoï and Ibsen, and all fin de siècle literature, yet would willingly part with a share of her knowledge of letters for that of joints. She is lucky if she knows baked meat from roast, or a frying-pan from a casserole. A "gammon" and a "flitch" are equal mysteries to her. She has the vaguest idea of when things are in season, and continually in her orders sins against the game laws. The weekly bills are sources of amazement and horror. Too long they are allowed to run on unpaid and unexplained, until, as the Italian proverb says: "Conti lunghi divengono serpenti." Who can wonder when anxieties, difficulties, and failure are the result of all this? It is as if a person ignorant of a note of music were given Wagner to read at sight. Her husband, accustomed to a ménage (the wheels of which by long oiling run smoothly) finds the change to bad cookery, unpunctual meals, and enormous bills, trying, even to the love of a honeymoon. Before long he acquires a disagreeable way of prefacing his sentences with the ominous and detestable words: "At my mother's. . ." The objectionable phrase (always used in antithesis to a grumble about his food): "Now, at my club. . ." is little better! At last incompetence begets contempt, mis-rule anger, and the married life, which began so fairly, promises small happiness to those who are bound together till death parts them. Nothing is more worthy of admiration and respect than order, system, good-management; or more odious than their converse. "Thriftiness," says Lecky, "is one of the best regulators of life. It produces order, sobricty, moderation, self-restraint, patient industry, and all that caste of virtues which is designated by the term respectability."

And how beautiful is King Lemuel's description of a virtuous woman: "She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness."

It is not to be supposed that emergencies will arise (out of the Colonies) which are likely to oblige a woman to put her culinary knowledge to active proof. English servants are, as a rule, sufficiently capable and well-trained to be able to send up meals after a fashion, more or less well as the case may be. Nevertheless English cooks are not Heaven-born geniuses, like French ones, and in the matters of cooking vegetables, omelette-making, and discreet flavouring they have much to learn. Take, for example, the received British idea of a

salad! Here is the orthodox receipt. Allow a couple of heads of lettuce to soak well overnight, in a pan of water, and when properly sodden and deprived of all crispness, mince them into little squares. (N.B.-Drying the lettuce first on a clean napkin would be fatal to the first principles of an English salad.) Next a small cupful of vinegar, a just proportion of salt and mustard, about three drops of oil, and a little cream. Beat all these ingredients together with the yellow of a hardboiled egg, and when your dressing proves sufficiently acid to provoke a wry face, you will have achieved the object of your desires, Salade à l' Anglaise! For the crisp French salad with its taste of fresh lettuce and chervil, and its soupcon of onion, its squeeze of lemon, and generous dressing of oil, the true-born insular Briton can have nothing but contempt. "No vinegar! Gracious powers! and onion. Oh! horrible!!" Nevertheless -

> "Let still the onion lurk within the bowl, And half suspected animate the whole."

Whilst we are on the subject of the eccentricities and idiosyncrasies of English cooks, let us treat of their manner of cooking *Haricots verts* as contrasted with that of their Gallic sisters. The average English cook contents herself with washing, stringing, and cutting the French beans, after which performance she considers, by the time she has consigned them to water, a saucepan, and a pinch of salt, that her duty in life towards them is accomplished. Mark the subtlety of the French directions:

Afrès avoir épluché et lavé les haricols, vous mettez de l'eau et du sel dans un chaudron, vous la failes bouillir, et vous y jetez les haricols; dès qu'ils ont bouilli un quart d'heure, vous tâtez s'ils flèchissent sous le doigt; laissez les égoutler dans une passoire, mettez les dans l'eau froide. Au moment de servir vous mettez un bon morceau de beurre dans une casserole, vous égoutlez les haricols, et vous les mettez dedans, avec du sel, du gros poivre, du persil, et de la ciboule hachés; vous les mettez sur un feu ardent, et vous les sautez; quand ils sont bien chauds, vous les servez sur le plat; ajoulez-y un jus de citron si vous voulez.

The merest tyro in household matters will admit, from this example alone, that at least there is something to learn in the art of cookery.

In Germany girls do not start in married life

handicapped by ignorance of domestic affairs, as our girls do. Dora Spenlowe could never have made the life of a German David Copperfield miserable, since she would certainly have passed through a course of training at one of the numerous Haushaltungschulen to be found all over Germany. When a young lady in that enlightened country has mastered the ordinary branches of learning, and is approaching that period of education miscalled "finishing," she is usually sent to a school to learn housekeeping, in conjunction very often with music, painting, and languages. are celebrated Haushaltungschulen Boppard, and many other places. Pupils, in addition to studying the mysteries of bread-making, baking, preserving, pickling, curing, and keeping household accounts, have in turn appointed days on which they repair to the kitchen to see the dinner cooked. They learn in this way the proper function of each kitchen utensil, and are not likely to excite the contempt of their cooks in after life by mistaking a fish-kettle for a preserving pan, or a jelly-bag for a dish-clout. Again, a knowledge of the precise quantity of the ingredients of dishes, is invaluable to the mistress of a household. Where a woman masters this difficulty she can readily detect wastefulness. Dishonest housekeepers may be kept in check and led into paths of virtue, compulsory or otherwise; and, above all, when mistresses are experienced and competent, servants are not unjustly blamed, as is often the case when those who rule are ignorant and careless. The gross waste which takes place in most households is both appalling and wicked. One of my friends once let her house in the South of England to a fine lady possessing more money than refinement, and more "smart" acquaintances than progenitors. A housemaid was left in the house by way of looking after the "Lares and Penates." One night she noticed a smell of burning, and proceeded on a tour of investigation. At last she discovered that the servants were destroying the loaves and meat (over and above their needs), which they could not sell in the country, and yet

were obliged to order from the tradesmen, for fear of their mistress comparing the respective accounts of London and country. Remembering the starving and suffering children of the East End, one feels indignant at the wickedness which resulted from an ignorant mistress's gross carelessness.

In Canada, as in the United States, most ladies have a practical knowledge of cookery and of housekeeping. This is the consequence, perhaps, of the servant difficulty, and also because in America every woman is her own housekeeper, There is no doubt that American women understand to perfection the art of dinner-giving in its subtlest and most artistic form. The decorations and arrangements of the table, the composition of the ménu, and the manner in which things should be cooked and served, are all matters of careful study with them. American dinners are perhaps shorter and simpler, and certainly they are more perfect. Everything is beautifully cooked, and of the best "the bounteous housewife, Nature," can provide. Of course, in this connection, dinners in private houses, not hotels, are understood, but the famous New York restaurant, "Delmonico," is hard to beat in any country.

The inexperienced housewife, in her entertainments, generally errs on the side of too bountiful a ménu. Her dinners are interminably long and absurdly pretentious. Each dish is saddled with a high-sounding title, and is sure to be d la something else. Honest food masquerades in fancy attire until its identity is unrecognisable, and nothing is properly cooked or sent up decently hot. Course after course comes; cold soup, messy entrèes, underdone joints, overdone game, jellies (either liquid or of the consistency of india-rubber), cold plates, cold dishes, much attempt at fine cookery and disastrous failure; the result of ignorance and incompetency being humiliation and mortification for host and hostess, and absolutely no wholesome eatable food for the guests.

Garrick spoke truth indeed when he said: "Heaven sends us good meat, but the devil sends cooks."



THE SECRET OF MONSIEUR DE ROCHE AYMON.

FRANCE, 16-

BY E. NESBIT AND OSWALD BARRON.

THE church was gutted with fire that the morning's heavy rain, now lying in sooty puddles on the cracked red tiles and riven tombs, had come too late to quench. Three lean bullocks, their flanks bleeding from the lance prods that brought them in, were huddling their heads over the low, charred wall of the chancel, where a thin whirl of black smoke twisted about them from something still smouldering in a vault.

The fire had stayed at the tower—the taller because no church lay under—that still topped the ridge over the fields, though it looked out now with two gapped, staring eyes that the cannon shot had opened in the wall. Under the bellringers' ropes the tower was heaped with clean straw, where the officers would lie to-night; and already a man had crept into a corner and was lying on his back holding his bandaged head tightly in his hands, while his spurred heel tore at the truss he lay on.

Outside a row of horses were picketed along the churchyard fence, and, sitting amongst the tombs, the riders worried bones and gnawed hunks of stale bread.

"And a week ago," said the tall man with long, faded brown hair running over the collar of his white leather coat, "a week ago I was supping delicately at the best ordinary in Paris with a case-knife and fork with enamelled handles. The knife was pictured with 'The Judgment of Paris,' and the fork with 'The Fate of Actæon.' Now my hands and teeth must tear at this mutton blade bone; for I have melted down knife and fork into my holsters, and there they have turned into riding pistols."

"In siege time," said the old man with the bristled chin, regarding a piece of red cheese through his one eye with appreciation beyond its deserts, "in siege time I have eaten horse and rat—they said I ate babies—I have eaten boiled grass without salt, I have stewed boot and belt, but for a soldier to quarrel with his plate for want of a fork to hold his meat on it—"

The man in the white coat had dragged his high-peaked saddle into the circle of men, and was seated astride of it with his legs stretched out and his heels driven into the moist turf. He broke the older man's speech by beating upon the pommel with his fists.

"Here comes one whom three days' war has brought to like straits. Tell him the story, and if he hath pity on these belt-tightenings, which are common to all tales of the wars, rather than on the condition of a gentleman whom fate hath deprived of his forks, I give him over for a miserable soul."

And he looked along the church path, where a man had limped into the yard—a man of some five-and-thirty years, whom ill fortunes had weathered like a man of fifty. He dragged himself, straining with his shoulders and stooping sadly. But as he neared the officers he stiffened and clapped his hand on his sword hilt, and with the point lifting the tangle of his very ragged red cloak, he came on with a swaggering step. Before the white-coated gentleman on the saddle he halted and bowed gravely.

"A good even to you all, sirs," he said, moistening his lips with his tongue.

"A good even to you, sir," said he on the saddle, raising his feathered hat gravely. "But the news that I see you bring is of no service to us. The state of the roads between this and Paris does not concern us who have no mind as yet for retreat." And he pointed with a sudden, coarse laugh to the broken boots of the new comer.

"It is true," said the man, reddening, "that I have made these last two days' journey on foot, but the wars have been long in coming, and the sun has not shone lately on those who have learned no other trade. Nevertheless, I beg you—"

The young man checked his laugh suddenly. "Do not speak," he said; "I can see at once that you wish to lay your sword at the service of the king."

The red cloak bowed and would have spoken eagerly, but the white coat motioned him to be silent

"You have come for a command, sir, and let me tell you that you are here at a moment when a desperate service is open to you." The eyes between the red cloak and the rusty black hat brightened wistfully.

"I have but now been complaining," said the man on the saddle, deliberately, "that I am forced to make this campaign without forks to my food, thereby reducing myself to barbarism and to a melancholy which must depress the faithful fellows who follow me."

The eyes watching him clouded with trouble. When one is—well, hungry—the perceptions are a little dulled.

"And I desire you to assume command at once of a party of one, yourself, and to lose no time in reaching the nearest notable town, there to employ those long fingers of yours in acquiring forks for the use of the king's officers."

It was a minute before the other understood, but the white coat sleeve was ripped to the elbow before they dragged him back.

He looked wildly over their shoulders from face to face till his eyes lit on the eldest of the group, the one-eyed officer who was rising slowly from the tomb on which he had sat immovable, until the scuffle had sputtered out.

"You, sir," thundered the one-eyed captain, "are you gentle or not?"

"I am of the house of Roche Aymon. That is noble enough," choked the prisoner. "And I claim——"

"Quite so, and one cannot refuse the cadets of Roche Aymon an opportunity of spitting themselves, though another time I should try to be born of the house of Fugger the banker, on one side at least."

"Do you mean to-"

"Yes; you see I and my father held of Roche Aymon before the house came to grief, and I know the face of the house even under an old hat."

"I do not fight with a rag-bag," growled the man with the scratched wrist.

"You meet Monsieur de Roche Aymon before we saddle up to-morrow," said the captain, "or the troop rides without you. You will not fight with him? Zounds, sir, I have held his father's stirrup."

II.

The man in ragged black came along the hedgerows by the sloppy field-paths in the morning. There were little broken bits of straw sticking in his red cloak and stockings, and he munched a piece of bread as he went, but when he came over the stile and would pass the first knot of soldiers, he threw the crust into the hedge and drew his cloak about him. The ruin of the church topped the hill like a ragged, war-bitten fort, and on the cracked flags of the nave he found the officers of the troop stirring, stiff-limbed and red-eyed.

The cadet of Roche Aymon saluted them, and would have waited apart, but in a little while it seemed to him, dazed as he was, that people were disputing round him, and he was plucked by the sleeve by a man with a sharp, lean face amongst very long black curls. The man had his sword out, and was speaking loudly in his ears, with a dozen of men gathered round him, all looking at the stranger.

"What does it please monsieur?" said the man who stood alone.

"At Dunquerque last year I saw it done—no offence to you, sir, but I will not set my man against any one who fights in his coat; for, I tell you, I saw my comrade killed under my eyes by a Dutchman with a secret under his coat."

"And so?" asked the stranger, as if he hardly understood.

"Let be," cried the other principal, who had taken his stand in the middle of the space, and was fingering his sword and settling his feet on the ground, but his second shook his black hair back from his face with an angry shake, saying:

"Both men shall fight in their shirt-sleeves; there shall be nothing here but fair trick of fence."

"I will not—there is nothing. I will fight as I am," and the man who was alone looked to the corner of the wall as a beast looks for a corner to-fight in.

Then they all cried together when they saw that. He should strip. Was it not enough to risk a life of theirs against a man who should have been bucketed out of the camp? But the man only stepped back and back towards the wall, showing his teeth as he went. Then suddenly the white coat ran between and pushed them back with his hand.

"I am raw with cold," he growled. "I will fight in my coat or not at all. Let the man be."

The black-haired man turned testily aside.

They fought in the middle of the nave, running together, thrusting and stabbing. Once the white

coat's blade ran along the right brow of his foe, scoring a red line to which the blood started, and once the black coat's sword danced back over the guard.

But no red jag showed in the white coat, and then the hilts locked and the swordsmen fell on the ground in a clattering heap, rolling over and clenching until a point snapped and broke and the white coat sprang free and dragged his own blade, bent and reddened, from under the collar of the black coat.

They happed the dead man up under the straw and rode away.

"It is ill fighting between a full man and a fasting," said one. "We have well saved a comrade, for the ragged man was the better blade, and would have shown it you all, had they not come to grips and claws. I thought ours a sped man, I promise you, a minute before that."

The black-haired man rode by the white coat.

"It was a risk," he said. "I know these ragged stabbers and their ways. Had you but left us alone you should have fought in your shirts or your skins."

The white coat laughed through pale lips. Then he took the other's hand, as they rode behind the troop, and thrust it suddenly into his own breast. The hand touched steel rings, and the man drew it back quickly, and his ears reddened a little amongst his black locks. "Louis," he said, "some day they will string you up to a tree. You dog."

The old captain had ridden silently before the troop. He came clattering back.

"You were all owls," he said, "the blindest of owls. A Roche-Aymon! Idiots. Couldn't you see that the man blinshed? He had no shirt under his black coat and so——"

The black-haired man chuckled low in his throat, and the troop cantered on over the cart-

BY THE SEA.

I saw the great sea, like a weary child
O'erspent with sporting in the arms of mirth,
Lay his smooth cheek and locks, all wet and wild
With the storm's kisses, on the lap of earth,
And heard him murmur to the yellow sands
Of his far wandering where the coral weaves
The lone isle's girdle, and those sun-kist lands
Where the rank forest's living robe of leaves,
That canopies green depths where strange things creep,
Is shot with winged flame of red and gold,
And myriad voices fret the gliding sleep
Of giant rivers, where the world is old.
And last he murmured of the eternal shore
Whence the tired traveller shall return no more.

WILLIAM K. HILL.

OUR FRIEND PUSS.

By MAXWELL GRAY.

UR friend Puss is a benefactor to mankind. He is the joy of the poor man's fireside; the comedian, acrobat, and dancer to the cottage public, the children's playmate, lonely old grannie's companion and solace, the housewife's ally and friend, the tranquil, harmless adornment of the poorest and richest hearths. When I think of the cats with whom I have dwelt from infancy, of long days and nights of sickness and pain they have soothed, of heavy cares they have beguiled, labours they have lightened, tragedies of which they have been the silent sympathetic observers, and happier moments they have made still happier by their graceful drollery, their serene beauty and bewitching ways, I feel like Sir Lancelot at the tomb of Arthur and Guinevere, nor could I have accomplished so much as one quarter of this my earthly pilgrimage unaided by the sympathy and comradeship of these gentle and joyous beings, whose smiles have blunted the edge of so many griefs.

"Smiles!" ejaculates the conventional detractor of dear Puss, "I've heard of making a cat laugh, but smile—never." "That, my good sir, is because you have never put yourself into sympathetic relations with this superior and sagacious creature, the most spiritual, the most refined and subtle of living beings; you don't understand Puss, and never will while you treat him as a mere fellowbrute, amenable to blows, coarse cajolery, and violent words."

Never was creature so cruelly maligned and completely misunderstood as our charming and intelligent little friend. He is, however, just at present in fashion, like Shelley, Ritualism, Slumming, Velasquez—an object of luxury, carefully bred, shown, decorated and medalled, artistically painted, melodiously be-rhymed—but always misunderstood. For it requires a high degree of culture and civilisation to appreciate this inscrutable being. Other living things are animals—human and otherwise—Puss is an intelligence brought within the scope of human sense by a very beautiful and highly organised form, "Nonsense," cries the

detractor, "they can't even speak." "Pardon me, Puss both converses and sings, in his own tongue. Have I not overheard two mother-cats conspite together to hide the kitten they shared, in speech that man's coarser organs can only partially understand?" The melody of Puss's song charms every decent fireside, and may often be studied with advantage in the watches of the night. Yet, when he chants his serenades and Tyrtean war-hymns, who appreciates his rolling harmonies?

A great people from the north long ago invaded our shores and improved our blood. Their Venus, Ostara, was fitly attended by cats, who were sacred to her. A greater people whose land was the birthplace of religion, art, and science, worshipped Pasht, and gave defunct pussy-cats funeral honours of embalming and mummification. It is but natural that the wisest nation on earth should have defined Puss. Poor Puss! tolerated and scorned by modern barbarians, converted after death into a missile wherewith to assault hostile politicians, and in life the sport of brutal boys and cruel dogs, and even when duly fed and kept for use, savagely chastised for small faults committed chiefly in ignorance or helplessness!

Faintly and feebly as he has been appreciated, still many poets in many tongues have hymned his charms; most great men, including Mahomet—and this inclines me to hold Islam a true religion—have loved him.

Shakespeare truely said little of him; that was because he thought so much, his feelings were beyond words. Imagine the sleek and happy cats who purred beneath the poet's hand at Stratford, climbed on his knee, gamboled on his hearth, and frisked up his mulberry-tree in warm twilights. No doubt mankind is greatly indebted to Shakespeare's cats; were they not the protoplasm whence all those dainty sportive fairies, those Pucks, Ariels, and Titanias, were evolved?

The beauty of Puss undoubtedly entered the soul of Gray; and Gay and Prior, each in his dim fashion, acknowledged his charm. Soft-hearted

Cowper, though devoted to another Puss, was not insensible to the witchery of the nobler being, to whom in his tenderest vein of mockery he sang; while Joanna Baillie rises almost to a fit appreciation of our friend; and even Wordsworth, the man of cold heart and narrow sympathies, loves a kitten, and has the happy phrase, "a kitten's busy joy." The graceful frolics of Herrick's cat lightened the dullness of his Devon parsonage. Leigh Hunt, in one of his most charming essays, pleads quite pathetically for the "cat on the rug," to a presumably brutal and prejudiced public, himself smitten by the creature's æsthetic charm and domestic virtue, though quite unable to appreciate his higher qualities.

Dr. Johnson was a good and even a great, though ponderous, man; therefore he treated the cat who honoured him by his friendship with some consideration; though, being the least poetic of mankind, he only faintly recognised the intelligence imprisoned in the black fur of the being he miscalled Hodge.

Théophile Gautier, fervid, subtle, imaginative, and gifted with poetic insight, has risen to the height of a feline Madame Gautier. But in his brief and bewitching account of that amiable and accomplished cat, he has scarcely done justice to her subtler charms and more solid qualities of heart and mind. I had not the honour of this distinguished cat's personal acquaintance; still, from her friend's depicture of her, I perceive that just as, according to Wordsworth, "We feel that we are greater than we know"—here is a man whose cat is greater than he knows, though he does not feel it. Yet Gautier thought a good deal of Madame Théophile,

Cats know pity and sympathy as well as strong affection and faithful comradeship, nor are they without a strong sense of humour.

People will of course bring up that stale old calumny of the mouse. I blame Nature rather than Puss, and think the wee mousie is too much dazed and stupefied to feel—but it must be evident to every candid observer that it is pure light-hearted fun that leads our friend to toy with and toss his nimble prey. For you will observe that a ball of cotton, a cork, or an own kitten is treated in the same way. The boy, with the pinned cock-chafer, has been excused on infinitely feebler grounds. No, my friends, lust of cruelty lurks in

many breasts, but not in the feline. "Puss is treacherous," says the calumniator. Dogs I have known treacherous, but never a cat.. I esteem our friend the dog—especially at a distance—but I must say that he has been over-rated, and his morals over-belauded, and especially in comparison with poor dear Puss.

"The cat," observes the calumniator, "is incapable of friendship, and purrs equally to the stroking of any hand," Of this I may briefly and simply remark that it is a lie. Many a dog I have known with tail obsequious to the casual blandishment of the stranger, but few cats; many a dog tepidly friendly to all, but a cat without one central devotion to one being, usually human, never. Puss's one grand devotion is not to be had for asking, neither is it to be bought or cajoled out of him. This inscrutable being bestows his affections in his own occult way, when and where he chooses; too much affection bores him; he respects himself and expects his friends to respect themselves. Thus those who lay their hearts too obviously and abjectly at his paws, are contemptuously, but not unkindly, relegated to an inferior place in his affections. Yet are his manners so polished, and his courtesy so perfect, that he never rejects civilities from strangers, haughtily tolerating the most fearful bores when guests; he knows how to administer a judicious snub, and to repel impertinence with dignity; but this is often done so delicately as to be imperceptible to the vulgar mind. Puss, like the true Briton, cannot be a slave. He is not above possessing, and sometimes condescending even to subjugate, slaves of his own, whom he uses with kindly despotism; but his heart's best affections are reserved for an equal, a circumstance that exalts him far above the abject and obsequious Never does he fawn on the hand that misuses him. He is too good a judge of character often to misplace his affections, as so frequently befalls the unthinking dog. But even the philosophic cat is fallible, and when this great tragedy tears his breast, he knows how to sustain it with dignity. Unjustly smitten and illtreated by his master, he turns sadly and proudly away, cut to the heart, unvindictive, but implacable; he has been mistaken, he mournfully owns in the depths of his mysterious and complex heart; silently he consumes his grief: not cream, nor fish, nor any dainty can assuage his sorrow. His master

may repent, he may be forgiven; that is, in what is called the *Christian* sense, but restored to the place in the heart he has wounded, never. Humpty Dumpty may be put together again after his fall, but not the character of that master who has disappointed his cat's expectations of him.

It is idle to expect the virtues of the whole race in every cat; owing to the folly and brutality of the human society they have been obliged to keep, the mental and moral development of individual cats has suffered. There is infinite variety in cat character, malice in none; foibles dear Puss naturally has, but all captivating, and many droll. "Well," sneers the calumniator, "stand up for Puss's morals as you will, you can't call her"-the calumniator always ignores the stronger sex, which in this exceptional and superior race happens to be the most intelligent-"honest!" Ah! my good friend, what is honesty? "What's yours is mine, and what's mine's my own," I seem to hear the furred philosopher of the fireside observe in his own inimitable way. What do you suppose is the opinion of the honey bee on the average honesty of mankind? You forget, my dear sir, that Puss considers the convenient biped man as existing solely to provide home comforts and fit companionship for the feline race: clearly man can occupy no other place in the universe, viewed through a cat's eye.

Pray observe the pained surprise in the countenance of Puss when chastised for graciously accepting dainties he supposes to be placed on the table expressly for his delectation. Yet even by your futile, conventional standard, Sir Slanderer, is dear Puss honest, when made to understand the eccentric wishes of his housemates in respect of food; though there is usually some one dainty, with regard to which he is frail.

Our charming friend is taunted with a love of ease, warmth, and quietude; these good things, let me observe, are not usually despised by the lofty and astute biped, man. Does the human philosopher stick pins in his study chairs, does he request the presence of the Salvation Army and barrel organs beneath his study windows, when thinking out abstruse problems and evolving world-changing theories? Was it thus that the Sage of Chelsea conclusively proved to mankind that fibs are wrong and foolish, and that nothing is stronger than strength? Puss pursues a loftier and more comprehensive philosophy than this in his long and profound meditations. On things feline and divine; on fate and free will; on the lamentable shortcomings of the necessary, but not always "harmless," man; and the best means of taming this singular animal to the true lord of creation; on the laws which govern this visible universe, and possibly of those on which depends the invisible—he muses in solemn majesty with half-shut eye in sunshiny or fire-lit hours, his organic and sensuous envelope lulled to forgetfulness, while his inward cat soars and suns itself in the lofty spaces of divine philosophy.

Let not man pronounce upon the conclusions at which our friend's philosophy arrives; they are probably beyond him. Let him rather respectfully listen to the dictum of a great living poet on the subject:

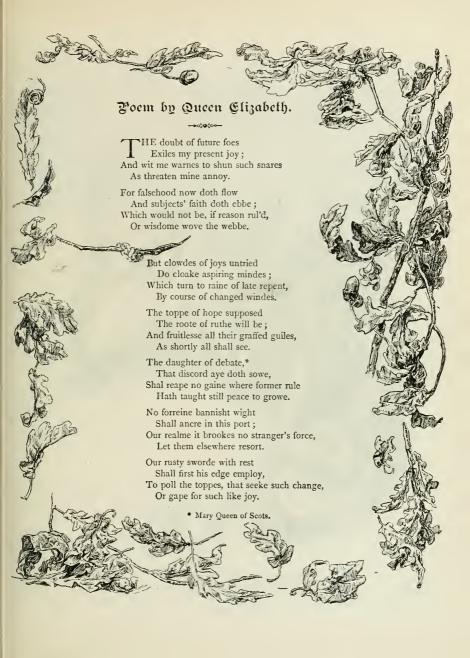
"I have a great affection for cats," said the Provençal Mistral, who is owned by a dignified and conscientious grey cat named Marcabrun; "I am convinced that their knowledge extends to many things too subtle for the human mind to grasp."

I have not read Mireio, but I am convinced that it is a fine poem.





"The doubt of future foes Exiles my present joy."





"Our realme it brookes no strangers force. Let them elsewhere resort."



"There is a Garden in Her Jace."

Words by RICHARD ALISON (1606).

Music by W. AUGUSTUS BARRATT.









CHAPTER I.

THE COASTGUARDSMAN.

N a wild, rock-bound coast some fishermen were gathered to moor their boats against the coming storm. The exigencies of their perilous calling had made them experts in reading the signs of the heavens, and they knew that the angry, copper-hued glare which had heralded the approach of dawn, was portentous of rough weather. Nor were they surprised when at noon masses of dark cloud came scudding across the sky, through which the sunlight fell at intervals in lurid brilliance on the sea. During the rest of the day, they had traced the progress of the storm, and now, in the waning light of afternoon, they saw it burst in all its majestic fury.

Before them lay the sea, athwart whose surging waters a red glare from the west still glinted, showing the foam-crested billows rushing one upon another's wake like race-horses eager to reach a goal. On they came, rolling and swelling, leaping and falling, as if gathering strength for their fierce assault upon the cliffs that flanked the bay. Here their fury spent itself in clouds of snowy spray that washed the very summits.

Gaunt and grim rose those beetling crags, frowning down on the turbulent waters at their base, as a giant might do on the impotent yelping of a cur at his feet. Their jagged peaks loomed out in stern relief against the sky, offering a resting-place for the sea-birds when tired with their mad sport 'twist wind and wave.

It was a scene of wild, imposing grandeur; nothing visible save the wide, storm-tossed ocean, locked in on either side by rugged arms of rock; nothing audible save the roar and hiss of the waves, the moaning of the wind, and occasionally the scream of the sea-birds. Few could have beheld it unmoved, especially now when the elements contributed to enhance the majesty of nature. For, above "the noise of many waters," the thunder's awful voice was beginning to make itself heard, reverberating in sullen peals along the sky; while vivid flashes of forked lightning illuminated with transient splendour the vast expanse of heaving water.

But now night was coming on; the crimson had died out from the west; and the fishermen, their task completed, prepared to hie homewards. Yet, ere they left the beach, they cast one parting glance upon the ocean, and, beholding its terrible strife, they said in carnest tones: "God help those at sea to-night!"

A group of children came running across the sands to bear them company to the village where their homes lay, on the landward side of the cliffs.

The only opening in the wall of rock by which the bay was girt appeared just at this part of the beach on which they stood, where the belt of sand extended about three hundred yards inland. On the left ridge, which sloped more gradually to the plain, appeared a small hamlet, whose dwellings clambered so irregularly upwards that from a distance they might have been mistaken for a flock of sea-birds that had alighted there for refuge from the storm on the other side.

Against the dark background the lights from the cottages shone cheerily out, quickening the steps of their absent owners, who were not loth to exchange the cold and discomfort of such a night for the warmth and cosiness of their own firesides.

Just as they left the beach, however, a solitary figure was seen coming toward it. Closer inspection proved him to be the coastguardsman.

He was a short, burly personage, enveloped from head to foot in waterproof. The oilskin cap he wore was drawn so low on his brow that scarcely anything of his face was visible at all. He walked with firm and rather pompous tread, and carried his head higher than is usually reckoned consistent with modesty. Indeed, he had altogether the air of a man who is aware of his own importance and would have others aware of it too.

The fishermen greeted him in their homely fashion, without, however, betraying much of that awe which so august an individual might have been expected to inspire. In fact, had the truth been told, Mr. Blinkie did not occupy the exalted place in their esteem to which he considered himself entitled Could he have heard the piquant jests of which he was the theme, and the racy stories told at his expense, his ears would have tingled with burning indignation.

For, although he had been acting in his present capacity for a good many years, he had never succeeded in surprising the dealers in that contraband traffic which was known to be carried on systematically on this part of the coast. On the contrary, he had been so often and so adroitly eluded, that the subject had become a standing joke, and rumours were affoat at the custom-house that, unless better success attended his efforts, a more efficient substitute would be found. Of these rumours, however, Mr. Blinkie was happily ignorant, and, perhaps, few of the villagers thought it for their interest to enlighten him. He contented himself with the prescribed routine of duty, to which he adhered with such regularity that the smugglers had little to fear.

Hence not even the boisterous wind and deluging rain of to-night prevented him from taking his accustomed promenade on the beach, and he felt glad that the men he now met should see it—should see that, while they were hurrying to the

shelter of their homes, he defied the elements, and braved their fury.

After patrolling for a while on this part of the beach, he prepared to extend his promenade; but the narrow belt of sand that skirted the base of the cliffs for a considerable distance round the bay was now under water, the tide being unusually high, so that he was obliged to scramble as best he could over the rocks. This at any time would have been a hazardous process, but in the darkness it was doubly so, and Mr. Blinkie was not one who courted danger. Accordingly, after he had advanced a little way, and had several times narrowly escaped a bad fall, he relinquished the futile attempt, and began to retrace his steps.

When within a few paces of the open beach, just where an abutting crag concealed it from view, his ear was arrested by the sound of stones rolling over the rock, as if displaced by some heedless foot.

He stopped to listen, and next moment discovered the cause of the effect in the person of a man who was advancing rapidly in his direction.

The intruder stopped short, however, on suddenly being confronted by the coastguardsman; then, reassured as to his identity, he continued his pace, saying as they met:

"Glad to see you at your post, Mr. Blinkie. One might have excused you for deserting it on a night like this. I think the coast will be clear of visitors for this evening, at least. Don't you?"

"Oh, ay, Mr. Lesly; nae ship could live on that sea; but for a' that, it's better to err on the safe side, and I'm determined I'll ferret oot thae reports about Hardy's folk up yonder," was the firm reply.

"What reports?" inquired the other.

"Is it possible ye havena heard, Mr. Lesly, and you in the custom-hoose? I wad hae thocht nae rumours o' that sort wad escape your ears."

"Why, you don't suppose I pay attention to all the village gossip on these matters, surely? But what are they saying about Bill Hardy?"

"Weel, they say that whiles he keeps a licht burnin' in his window far into the nicht. Some o' the folk threap that they hae seen it; and Rab Sproul declares that, comin' hame ae nicht late frae the fishin', he saw a boat wi' four men in't put aff frae the shore, just below Hardy's hoose. No that I'm inclined to set store by ony information that comes frae sic a source, for a'body kens puir Rab's no a' there."

"Nor I, Mr. Blinkie; for, apart from the unlikelihood of the thing, I don't believe Hardy is a man to be a party to smuggling. Any little acquaintance I have had with him has disposed me in his favour. I think him as honest a fellow as any in Glenathole. But, of course, you are quite right to make sure about it; I wish you success. Confound that wind! it nearly had me down."

"Deed, Mr. Lesly, I wonder ye wad come oot the nicht ava; ye're no like me that canna help it. Are ye gaun ony farther?"

"No; only the length of the Salmon Reef. I like to stretch my limbs in the evening, you know, after being confined all day at the desk; in fact I find it necessary for health. Yonder's the moon breaking through the clouds, so I won't come to grief among those infernal rocks, as I nearly did a few minutes ago. I wish you good evening."

With an agile spring he bounded off, while the coastguardsman more leisurely pursued his way homewards, comforted by the assurance that one at least of the custom-house officers shared his views, and approved his vigilance.

CHAPTER II.

THE COTTAGE ON THE CLIFF.

Wherever the point indicated as the Salmon Reef might have been, the solitary pedestrian did not seem particularly desirous of reaching it; for, ere he had advanced many hundred yards, he turned suddenly round, and directed his gaze upwards to the summit of the cliffs. Nor did he withdraw it until he had seen a bright, steady ray of light gleam out for a moment from that particular spot, then as suddenly vanish.

"No, it won't do," he murmured to himself; "I must caution Hardy. Should it be observed again, it might lead to inconvenient inquiries, and, dolt though he be, Blinkie would be sure to make capital out of a thing like this. What's keeping them, I wonder?" he continued, speaking in an undertone. "Ned was to be waiting for me here, and it's past the hour."

Scarcely had he uttered the words when a low, cautious whistle caused him to halt and look up in

the direction whence it proceeded. The moonlight, breaking for an instant through the clouds, revealed the figure of a man, who was letting himself down the almost perpendicular face of the rock with the nimble dexterity of a chamois. From crag to crag he sprang, swinging himself down with fearless ease, until he had gained the foot.

Lesly advanced to meet him, asking somewhat impatiently:

"Why is your father not here?"

"He and Nicholas are comin' doon the ither road," replied the young man; "they'll be here directly. Faither has been watchin' a' the afternoon for the *Petrel*, but we canna see ony signs o' her. Do you think it's possible she could be here the nicht?"

"If she left Hamburg on the third, she is bound to be here; but, whether or not, she couldn't send out her boats among waves like these. I hope she has put into the Gray Loch; she could anchor there without much fear of detection. Did you get those bales safely away last night?"

"Ay; Morton cam doon wi' ane o' his springcarts, an' we happed them wi' the straw. Naebody wad hae had the least suspeccion there was onything under't. Morton drove the cart himsel'. He says he can get the goods quite easy to Edin burgh."

"He must be cautious, however; it won't do to presume on Blinkie's stupidity. I met him tonight as I was coming along, and he told me a report has got abroad about the signal light up yonder. But there's your father; I'll speak to him about it."

A bluff sailor now came upon the scene, followed by a tall, slim youth. They both greeted their visitor in a manner that betokened freedom as much as deference. The elder of the two, despite his blustering, betrayed a certain restraint in the presence of this man, and seemed to eye him covertly, as if half afraid of him.

"Hardy, we'll have to hit on some other expedient for beckoning to our friends across the waves," began Mr. Lesly, pointing to the ocean. "Some of Mr. Biinkie's friends have been kind enough to tell him you burn a light in your window occasionally, and they have also seen the boats putting out from here. I tried to put him off the seent, which is not very difficult, as you know; but others may prove sharper than the coastguardsman. There are a few,

you know, in Glenathole who don't patronise our line of business,"

"That's no the warst we have to fear," replied the person addressed, in very significant tones, as he drew a step nearer.

"What do you mean?" questioned the other, his eyes darting a sharp, inquisitive glance upon the speaker.

"I just mean that ye'd better bide awa' frae here for a while to come. Morton has got an inklin' that we're no alane in this wark."

"How could he know that?" cried Mr. Lesly, turning almost fiercely upon the man beside him. "You don't mean to say he knows that I have anything to do with it."

"He kens, at onyrate, that ye've been at oor hoose up bye."

"Confound him. Did he see me?"

"No, but he saw yer name in ane o' thae books Meg has been readin'. The hissy left it lyin' aboot, an' Morton took it up an' saw yer writin' on't afore she could wrest it frae him. Maybe he jaloused it was nae mair than a palaver atween you an' her, but I thocht I wad gie ye warnin' for he's no ane I wad lippen tae."

"No, not likely. But what did he say?"

"He just laughed and said a word or twa to Meg that garred the lassie turn red in the face. She'll tell ye hersel' about it, for she's been in a sair way ever since."

"I must caution Meg to be more careful in future," was the abrupt reply, accompanied by a hasty movement, as he presently added: "Let's go up; there's no use waiting here any longer. I see no chance of the *Petrel* to-night, and even if she had got this length, she would have to anchor in the Gray Loch. We can watch for her lights from your window. Stay a moment. I want that tobacco taken up to-night. It must be sent to Edinburgh on Tuesday. Where's Ned? Tell him to lend us a hand."

Ned, who had been reconnoitring the beach, promptly answered the summons, and the four men proceeded to a certain spot among the rocks, with which each seemed perfectly familiar. Bill Hardy himself, who in feats of strength was a veritable Hercules, laid his sinewy hands upon a huge rock that to anyone else would have seemed immovable, and rolled it aside as easily as if it had been a ball. The mouth of a deep cavern was thus disclosed,

into which Mr. Lesly and two of his adjutants entered, while the tall youth Nicholas remained on guard outside. Ned produced from a shelf in the rock a dark lantern, which, on being lighted, revealed several large bales, casks of brandy, and a heap of packets rolled in oilskin. From among the last-mentioned store Lesly selected some of the bulkiest, noting down in a small book a few particulars relative to the precise quantity and quality of the goods. This done, Ned and his father conveyed them outside, while Mr. Lesly took a minute survey of the remaining stock.

As deftly as he had removed it. Bill Hardy replaced the huge boulder on the mouth of the cave, and then strewed some loose stones in front, as a further precaution against scrutiny. All four assisted in carrying the packets up the cliff, Mr. Lesly being somewhat in advance. The speed and dexterity with which he ascended showed minute knowledge of the path; but to-night he seemed eager to outstrip the others.

Just as he gained the top, a girl came running toward him with quick, nervous haste, and threw her arms about his neck, crying in tremulous accents: "Oh, Norman! is it you? I want to speak to ye. I've been wearyin' a' day to see ye, to tell ye something—"

Her words were stopped, for, with a sudden, impetuous embrace, she was caught in Lesly's arms, then as suddenly released. "Hush!" he whispered; "they're coming. Carry this to the house. I'll follow directly. Meet me here in an hour."

The girl instantly obeyed, and Lesly, waiting until the rest of the party rejoined him, accompanied them to the cottage.

It was perched on the very summit of the cliff, and only its small dimensions seemed to have saved it from being carried off by the storms long ago. Now, as the gale swept over it, shrieking wildly, as though bent on seizing it for its prey, few would have cared to run the risk of even a single night's precarious shelter within its walls.

The light from one small square window conducted the men's footsteps to the low door, which was speedily opened for their reception. A ruddy glow streamed out into the night from the wide, open fireplace, where blazed a cheerful peat fire, whose brightness almost dazzled their eyes.

Before the fire stood a young girl, bending over the contents of a huge pot which hung suspended

from the yawning chimney. In the strong light her face was seen to full advantage; and a very pretty face it was. The round, dimpled cheeks looked as if they had verily taken their bloom from the roses; the laughing blue eyes as if they had borrowed their tint from the sea on which they constantly gazed; while the mouth, though somewhat large, redeemed itself by the readiness with which its full, red lips curled into smiles, disclosing two rows of nut-white teeth. A mass of hair, which, in the blaze, looked golden, fell down to her waist, confined only by a blue riband at the back. The figure was lithe and graceful, enhanced by the picturesque garb of her country, which consisted of a grey petticoat, bordered with scarlet, a blue bodice, laced in front, which, from its lack of sleeves, served all the better to display the beauty of a full, wellrounded arm, and a tartan plaid thrown carelessly back over the shoulders.

She looked up with a coy smile as the party entered, and a close observer might have seen her colour heighten as one of them addressed to her a passing word of courtesy. She continued to watch their movements with interest, as they deposited their merchandise on the sanded floor, and proceeded to stow it away. Indeed, the porridge she was cooking would have been hopelessly singed at this point had not a harsh voice at her side recalled her to a sense of her responsibility.

"Meg, ye hissy, will ye keep yer een on the pat and let the men alane," was the exclamation uttered by an old crone who occupied an arm-chair on the other side of the hearth. The face corresponded with the voice, which was harsh as a raven's. Although still retaining traces of former beauty, the features were now sharp and distorted. The hooked nose and prominent chin; the keen, black eyes, shining with undimmed lustre from beneath whitened eyebrows; both together combined to lend an eagle-like aspect to her face. The restless vigilance of her eyes seemed to belie the snow-white hair.

Her watchful glances followed every movement around her; and as packet after packet of the contraband wares was opened, she studied each, asking questions that betokened far more shrewdness than they relished. Mr. Lesly, in particular, appeared impatient of her scrutiny, and ordered a ladder to be brought, and the trap-door in the roof to be opened at once.

The existence of such a convenience could not

thave been guessed at by one uninitiated in such matters. The low roof was crossed by thick rafters, between two of which the joinings of the trap-door were effectually concealed. Indeed, the general appearance of the cottage was so primitive that few would have suspected that it could afford accommodation for such strange merchandise. The furniture consisted of some rough chairs and a table; a dresser, whose shelves, rising one above another to the roof, were filled with plates, bowls, &c.; and two beds in the wall. In one corner of the wall ticked a Dutch clock, garnished with peacock's plumes. From the rafters hung bunches of dried herbs and a net-work bag containing onions.

A very simple abode, surely; and yet, despite its humble aspect, it sometimes contained more wealth than a London warehouse.

A few minutes sufficed for the disposal of the precious goods, and, after giving some further instructions as to their final despatch, Mr. Lesly prepared to go.

The porridge stood cooling in the row of bowls on the dresser; but Meg had disappeared. She had run out a few minutes ago to close the door of some outhouse which was banging in the wind.

Lesly stole cautiously away, leaving the inmates of the cottage to the enjoyment of their supper.

Half-an-hour went past ere Meg returned, her face flushed, her eye sparkling, and her manner excited. She had evidently been running.

"Whaur hae ye been a' this time?" asked the old crone, in sharp, querulous tones, eyeing her evident discomposure with keen penetration.

"I was ower at Glenathole an errand," was the abrupt reply, as Meg, throwing off her plaid, proceeded to rinse the bowls in water.

"Ye didna gang alane, I trow," rejoined the grandmother. "Ye've been deaf to my warnin' afore, Meg," she continued, leaning forward on the staff her bony fingers clutched; "but mind my words, ye'll rue the day ye listened to that fair-spoken, faus-hearted loon."

Meg was making a loud clatter with the dishes while the old woman was speaking; but at these last words she stopped short, the flush deepened on her cheek, and a flash of mingled fear and anger darted from her blue eyes. No word escaped her lips, however, which were compressed as if in pain.

That night, when all the other inmates of the cottage were asleep, Meg sat before the dying embers, bending over an open locket, on one side of which was a miniature, bearing the initials "N. L." It was the face of a comparatively young man, very attractive evidently to her who feasted on it. The eyes, unusually brilliant, looked out with a piercing radiance, which yet, to a narrow observer, appeared to change as you gazed, and avoid your scrutiny. The brow above was somewhat low, but crowned with dark clustering hair. The nose was almost faultlessly straight, the slight hook rather enhancing it than otherwise. The lips were thin, but beautifully moulded, and seemed to wear a hovering smile at all times. Altogether it was a handsome face; and Meg kept gazing on it until tears dimmed her vision. Then, with a passionate kiss, she replaced it in her bosom, and dreamt that night that she heard once more her lover's words as he gave it.

CHAPTER III.

DOUGLAS CASTLE.

The storm spoken of in the preceding chapter had passed away, and now September's golden light fell on the smiling earth. Fields of yellow grain waved in the balmy air, and the branches of the orchard trees drooped with their luscious load. Only enough rain had fallen to freshen the green of grass and leaf, and fill the ripening fruit, while the flowers drank in the grateful moisture and assumed their loveliest tints. No wonder the husbandman's heart rejoiced as he went forth at morn to view the rich harvest, so soon to be gathered in; no wonder the artist's eye brightened as it lighted on the fair prospect before him of wooded plaiu, winding stream, and distant hills, all clad in the bright hues of early autumn.

Between the hills on the coast-line and those seven miles inland spread the beautiful plain of Dunarnon. The hills by which it was bounded now glowed in their autumn dress of purple heather, which contrasted well with the green of the trees clustering here and there on their sides. The plain itself was varied by luxuriantly wooded slopes, while a stream meandered through it by many windings until lost behind a rising ground. The stream divided the valley, and from either

bank stretched field upon field of corn, or reaches of pasture-land, separated by thick hedges. Scattered at intervals throughout the plain appeared white cottages and farmsteads with their surrounding hayricks, the adjoining fields stocked with cattle and poultry, and the orchards shining with fruit.

A white road, whose course the eye could trace at intervals, led through the valley to Glenathole, whence it branched off at right angles, extending inland. Thither we must follow it. For two miles it ran in a straight direction, until interrupted by the stream already mentioned. Over the stream a strong stone bridge had been thrown, beyond which the road wound for other three miles, finally terminating on the outskirts of the wood that bordered the princely domain of Sir Edward Donglas.

From out the encircling trees rose the lofty towers and battlements of Douglas Castle. The storms of centuries had beaten in vain against its massive walls, which, though now grey with age, looked as if they would brave the storms of as many centuries more. Along these walls ran long lines of mullioned windows, now gleaming in the light of the setting sun. In front, where the trees had been partially cleared away, a better view could be obtained of the house. It was quadrangular in shape, with four corner turrets. Between these turrets ran the imposing battlements, beneath which extended numerous rows of casements. From the centre of the building rose a tower, elevated considerably above the rest of the edifice. On the top of this tower a banner was now waving, announcing that the family were at

A winding avenue led up from the main road to the castle, opening suddenly upon a broad terrace, defined by a low stone balustrade. Upon this terrace looked the front windows, and from it a flight of steps led up to the principal entrance.

A scion of the noble family whose members play so important a part in Scottish history, Sir Edward Douglas had received his princely mansion from an illustrious ancestor, who, after a life spent amid the turmoil of state affairs, bequeathed it to his son, then a mere youth. But the inheritance brought with it many cares and difficulties little anticipated by the young heir, and which, but for indomitable perseverance and energy, must have

proved too much for him. These qualities, however, he possessed in no common degree, and in course of time he freed the estate of all encumbrances, and followed up this achievement by extensive improvements.

His ambition did not stop there, however. More than the increase of his own revenues, he sought the well-being of his tenantry, who soon came to regard him with feelings akin to that spirit of loyal devotion which had animated their forefathers in feudal times, and which only needed the touch of kindness to call it forth in all its intensity. The previous proprietor, who had been, through his participation in the rebellion of 1745, almost a stranger to his own estate, left in the recollection of his tenantry very little to which affection could cling; in fact, few of them had had any but the slightest acquaintance with him. The subsidence of state troubles, however, brought about a happier order of things, leaving men free to cultivate social relationships, and now, under the reign of peace, prosperity was restored.

It was a memorable day for the people of Glenathole when Sir Edward brought home to the castle a lady whose beauty and noble birth made her in every respect a fitting partner of his fortunes, and who soon endeared herself to all hearts by her simple manners and ready sympathy. Without any appearance of condescension, she went in and out among the tenantry, interesting herself in all that concerned their welfare, and practically assisting her husband in his schemes for promoting the same. As a natural result, she became the object of sincere affection, which, in some cases, approached almost to veneration, and a short time saw the old state of things restored on the Douglas estate.

As the years went on, children's voices resounded once more within the castle walls, and great was the rejoicing when the news spread that the first-born was a son. Then came a daughter, who promised to rival her mother's fair beauty. Another daughter succeeded her; then last of all came a son. From their very infancy these children were enshrined in the affections of the people in the district, for their childhood and youth were passed at home, with the exception of a year or two at Edinburgh, which offered greater facilities for the completion of their education than were procurable in a country district. To the university

there Harry, the eldest son, had been sent two years before the opening of our story, but, evincing no aptitude for study, he was released from farther attendance, and allowed to follow his own bent, which had always been toward farming; though at this period of his history, it must be confessed, his attention seemed directed much more to the recreations of country life than to its more practical pursuits.

Few, however, regretted his choice, for, notwithstanding the carelessness, the reckless daring, the astounding eccentricities of which he was constantly guilty, and the frequent scrapes into which he contrived to fall, there was not a man, woman, or child within thirty miles of Glenathole who would not have ventured a good deal for the sake of bright Harry Douglas,

CHAPTER IV.

THE HARVEST-HOME.

SEATED at one of the upper windows of Douglas Castle, a book in her hand which she is not reading, is Sir Edward's eldest daughter, Adelaide.

The sun is nearing the horizon, and its brilliant light, falling upon the open page, has lured away her eyes to the gorgeous panorama of clouds in the distance.

As the sun slowly sinks behind the mountain peaks, the golden glow deepens to saffron; then a ruddy flush suffuses the sky, making the clouds look like crimson islands floating in a sea of green. The ocean, lying placid as a lake, becomes dyed with the tint, as if it blushed beneath the parting gaze of its ardent lover. Then the brightness gradually fades from the west, the sea grows grey; and the mountains, sharply outlined against the sky, are for a brief while veiled in misty purple. A purple haze begins to tinge the woods.

As the shades begin to close around, she turns from the distant to the nearer view. Where the hills part, she can see on the slopes of one of them a hamlet overlooking the sea, which there forms another small bay. Within this bay are sailing little fishing-boats, some of them making for the open deep. Higher up the hill, and peeping from the trees by which it is shaded, are one or two isolated dwellings. On one of these she fixes her gaze, until the fading light hides it from

view. And now the stars begin to appear in the violet-coloured heavens, and presently a soft, greenish light creeps along the wooded hill. At the sight of this her heart is glad, for it is the moon—the glorious harvest-moon. Slowly and majestically it climbs up the heavens, until she can see its "most patient brilliance" silvering the towers and battlements of the castle.

Then, at last, rising from her seat, and closing the casement, she turns to leave the room.

But, were there light enough to see it, there is a sparkle in her eye, and a tremulous flush of joy on her cheek, that tell their own tale. As she moves to the door, why does she pause, as if reluctant to turn the handle? What makes her heart beat so fast as, passing out to the gallery, she listens to the murmur of voices coming up from the hall below? Is there one voice among so many whose tones have for a moment arrested her ear? Perhaps so, for again she pauses, and, leaning over the balustrade, surveys the animated scene below.

In the hall servants were bustling about, as group after group arrived. The light of many lamps illuminated the grand old hall, down whose vista of pillars guest after guest disappeared within the radiance of the spacious drawing-room at the extreme end. Their figures were reflected in the black, oaken floor, polished to a perilous smoothness; and among these Ada Douglas had recognised that of a young girl, at whose side her brother Harry was walking, in the train of guests who were wending their way to the reception room. The spell was broken, and, quitting her post of observation, she prepared to follow them.

The drawing-room in which the guests were assembled was a princely apartment. It was long, wide, and with an arched roof. One side was almost entirely occupied by windows, opening upon a lawn. The opposite side was lined with closest mirrors, which enlarged the room indefinitely. At the lower end was a row of white marble pillars, supporting an arch, from which fell curtains of rich green velvet, that were looped by cords to the outermost pillars. The part of the room thus shut off formed an ante-drawing-room, affording an agreeable retreat for any who wished to indulge in a quiet chat. From the white frescoed roof hung two glittering chandeliers, whose crystal drops shimmered in the light they gave.

At any time the apartment presented an appear-

ance of imposing splendour; but to-night the effect produced by the jewels and motley array of the fair visitors who thronged it was almost dazzling.

Dancing had already begun when she entered, and she stood near the door for a few minutes watching the various groups now threading the mazes of a quadrille, and listening to the stirring music that rolled down the room on waves of sound.

Many a fair form glided past, and many a bright smile greeted her, as one after another swept on to the quick beat of the music; but her eye roved restlessly among the everchanging groups until it found the object of her quest.

Half-way down the room, within the deep embrasure of one of the windows, a young man was bending over the chair on which sat a lady, also young, and evidently enjoying the light banter of his conversation. Her face wore a radiant smile as she looked up into his, which she did very frequently.

And truly, if her gaze was too frequent, the countenance on which it dwelt might well have excused the error. The clear-cut features were classic in their faultless proportion: sculptor never chiselled a smoother, nobler brow, a straighter nose, or more exquisitely moulded lips; and perhaps neither Phidias nor Praxiteles, the immortal artists of antiquity, ever portrayed a smile so sweet as that which wreathed those lips to-night. Certainly it lay not within the compass of their art to reproduce the radiance of those deep, starlike eyes, whose peculiar grey changed to blue or black according as the mood was one of gaiety or earnestness. Beneath their "jetty fringe" of long lashes they looked out upon you with a strange, appealing tenderness, against which few were proof. Fair, wavy hair rippled over the finely rounded head, straying on the brow in clustering curls. It was indeed the face of an Apollo, in all the radiant beauty of youth.

Yet, as she noted the gay smile he bestowed on the lady at his side, an expression almost of pain quivered on the lip of Ada Douglas. She withdrew her gaze, and was turning away in an opposite direction, when her brother's voice accosted her. "Ada," he said, hurriedly, "Mary Errol is waiting for you; she sent me to fetch you. Yonder she is, beside the pillar. We thought you meant to pose for a statue, you looked so

grave and still, when everybody else is whirling about. Come this way."

Without waiting for an answer, the young man preceded her to the other end of the apartment, piloting her steps through the crowd of dancers, until they gained the archway, within the shade of whose curtain sat the lady they were seeking.

In contrast with the other gaily-attired guests, her dress of dark grey silk looked very plain; indeed, the extreme simplicity of her garments at all times had led to her being nicknamed by her friends "the little Puritan." Her dark brown hair was smoothly braided over an open brow, beneath which shone two expressive eyes of the same hue, eyes so fearlessly honest in their steady lustre that one glance was sufficient to inspire trust. The other features, though clearly defined, were not regular: but there was an expression of quiet decision on the lips that accorded well with the steady, bright eyes; and, when they smiled, you could hardly tell whether the lips or the eyes had most to do with the wonderful transformation which then took place, rendering the plain face positively beautiful. In figure she was extremely neat and graceful; and the diminutive size of both hands and feet was a cause of envy to not a few ladies otherwise more highly favoured.

This was the lady who now rose to greet her friend. Perhaps no more striking contrast could be conceived than that they presented as the latter, her beauty enhanced by the gleaming white raiment and sparkling gems she wore, embraced her sober friend, and took the vacant chair beside her: morning and twilight seemed somehow to have met.

"So you have really overcome your scruples, Mary?" said Ada, smiling, as she surveyed her friend's dress; "and have actually exchanged your black gown for a grey one? What fortitude! And here you are in the midst of the revel, not at all distracted, but looking perfectly serene. Does she not, Harry?"

Mary's face lighted up with a happy smile as she replied:

"Perhaps, had you seen me an hour ago, you would have thought me looking quite otherwise. You don't ask me why I failed to keep my promise this afternoon."

"Oh, I forgot," said Ada. "Yes, we expected you at five. What prevented you from coming?"

"No fault of my own, I assure you. I had everything in readiness—even this important part of the programme," she added, pointing to her dress, "and was waiting for Kenneth to drive me here; but he never came. I had expressly stipulated with him to come home at half-past four, so as to be in good time. Imagine, then, my mortification when five o'clock struck without any sign of his appearance. At last he came, quite as unconcerned as though he had not kept me waiting a minute; and when I asked for an explanation, what do you think my dutiful brother Kenneth said? He——"

"Who is taking my name in vain?" inquired a rich, melodious voice from behind the chair of Ada Douglas at this moment; and Mary Errol, as she turned round, saw her companion's face suffused with a mantling blush. For in the speaker she had recognised the handsome youth whose attentions to another lady had attracted her notice a few minutes ago.

Quite undismayed, however, by the unexpected interruption, Mary continued, with an arch look at the intruder—

"I am glad you have come to answer for yourself, Kenneth. And now, Ada, just hear the reason he gave for keeping me waiting a full hourand-a-half; he had the effrontery to observe that Mr. Lesly had urged him——"

"Mary!" exclaimed the delinquent, a momentary contraction of the brow betraying the irritation which he tried to conceal, as with a smile he turned to Ada Douglas, and said, "Pray do not mind her; she is only trying to malign my character. She will—"

"Speak the truth, sir," supplemented the undaunted sister. "Ada, he kept me waiting all that time rather than relinquish the pleasure of a row in the bay with Mr. Lesly. Now, don't you think I have a most dutiful brother?"

She turned a smile of quiet humour on his face, where vexation was pretty plainly depicted. Thither the gaze of her companion was also directed with a coy, interrogating expression, as if beseeching him for an explanation.

"Now, Kenneth, you vagabond, what have you to say for yourself?" asked Harry Douglas, who all this time had kept his post in silence behind Miss Errol's chair.

The roguish smile with which the accused

greeted the challenge reminded them of a naughty school-boy whose sense of wrongdoing is so slight as to allow of his smiling even under a reprimand. In such a case even the most frigid dominic could hardly sustain a proper severity; and, had the offence been infinitely more heinous, that smile now bent upon the upturned face of Ada Douglas would have irresistibly disarmed anger.

"Have I not been very wicked, Ada?" he said, in mock seriousness. "Was it not unpardonable wickedness to miscalculate time, and cause my punctual sister delay? I know not how to atone for the offence, unless she will condescend to accept the contrition I now testify on bended knee."

So saying, he was about to suit the action to the word, when his sister, rising to her feet, prevented such a demonstration by moving to another part of the room.

Here, however, she had to submit to another ordeal scarcely less embarrassing; for at that instant a young girl darted from a circle of dancers, and seized her in her arms, then skipped round and round in a dumb show of admiration, clapping her hands and gesticulating in a manner peculiarly discomposing to her who was its victim.

"Oh! you wicked little worldly-minded Puritan!" she exclaimed, her dark eyes sparkling with mischievous glee, and her pretty face all aglow with vivacity. "What will Mr. Dunbar say when he hears you have been decking yourself out in this fashion? Won't you catch it, Mary? And a bracelet, too! Oh, the vanity! Now, since you've gone so far, you can't refuse to dance. Yonder is your old admirer, Mr. Macalpin, looking out for you, I declare. Come along, Mary; I'm dying to see you whirling with him through the waltz."

Fortunately for Miss Errol, Harry Douglas at this moment interfered as she was being dragged into the vortex.

"Jessy, you forget yourself!" he said almost sharply, releasing her hold on her companion, to whom he offered his arm, saying his sister desired her return to the place she had so precipitately deserted.

The young lady, pouting slightly at the peremptory action of her elder brother, followed them more quietly to the recess where her sister was seated, Mr. Errol standing by her side, seemingly

engrossed in conversation. At sight of them the pout changed to a significant smile, which, however, Jessy took care to conceal before she presented herself within the range of their vision.

An expression of dismay on her sister's face as she came up to her chair caused her to look ruefully down on a wide rent in the skirt of her dress.

"Well, really, Ada, I could not help it," she began, in response to the expostulating glance; "it was that great clumsy Malcolm Drummond with his gigantic feet. I could have boxed his ears."

She proceeded to rectify the disaster with Miss Errol's assistance, retreating behind the curtain meanwhile. Presently she reappeared, with her arm twined about her friend's waist; and, noticing a number of people at that moment leaving the room, she exclaimed: "Oh! I believe they're going out to the barn. Let's go too. It's infinitely better fun than our stiff quadrilles. Come, Mary! Let's all go."

Ada Douglas looked to Mary and her brother to ascertain their wishes on the subject, and, finding they both entertained the proposal, followed with them to the place specified.

A few minutes brought them to a long, low-roofed building, from which sounds of festivity issued. Jessy Douglas opened the door, and ushered them into a scene unique in its way.

The room was narrow, and of considerable length. From the rafters across the ceiling hung rows of lamps. The walls had been garnished with evergreens and flowers, festoons of which were twined about the beams. Over the doorway a star, ingeniously constructed of reapers' sickles, glittered in the lamplight. At the other end of the apartment a sheaf of corn had been fastened up on the wall, gaily decked with ribands—the last sheaf gathered from the fields. On the white floor stood a large table, on which was spread a sumptuous repast.

Around this table a goodly company had already assembled, whose robust forms and ruddy faces were pleasant to behold, and reflected credit on their calling. To-night every eye was bright, every countenance smiling; and with good cause too, for this day had seen the completion of their labours; the last of the corn had been safely gathered in; and now they were met to celebrate their annual feast, the harvest-home.

As our friends entered the room, a hearty cheer was resounding from the assembled company. It was caused by Sir Edward Douglas, who now came forward to address them.

He was a tall, noble-looking man, with the clearcut features of his race, and a commanding mien, which, but for the inherent kindness and benevolence of his nature, might have been considered the indication of pride. His very presence impressed the beholder as that of a man born to rule; the dark, piercing eye was one to "frown a lion into growling."

The faces of his hearers kindled with pride as he stood at the head of the long table and spoke a few words expressive of his happiness to have them for his guests on the occasion of the harvesthome.

His practical acquaintance with their difficulties in cultivating land long neglected, enabled him to sympathise fully with their present rejoicing now that they were literally reaping the fruits of their labours; and he bade them accept this as only the earnest of further success. Much was yet to be done, nor would he rest content until every one on his estate was as happy and prosperous as he ought to be. Above all, he desired that between himself and his tenantry there should always exist the friendly relations which both he and his wife had striven to promote. Not merely as tenants they wished to regard them, but as friends, with interests and objects in common. It was, he concluded, his supreme ambition to discharge the duties of his station so as to be able to give a good account of his stewardship at last. In the name, then, of Lady Douglas and himself he thanked them for their presence there, and hoped they should celebrate yet many another harvest-home.

A prolonged cheer greeted the close of this short speech, during which the company rose and drank to the health of "Sir Edward and his lady." This toast was speedily followed by another in honour of "the family," to which Harry Douglas was obliged to respond, despite his reluctance. He advanced, blushing like a maiden, and looking supremely uncomfortable; and the ringing cheer which hailed his appearance increased his confusion tenfold, and deepened the crimson on his boyish cheek. Raising his handsome face, and looking shylyround the room, he told them speechmaking was not his forte; he would much rather

talk to them privately, as was his wont, supposing he had anything to say that was worth hearing, which they knew was very seldom. Then, turning round to his younger sister, who chanced to be standing a little behind him, he added, to the unbounded amusement of the whole company, with the exception of that young lady herself, that he was quite sure his sister's name might have been more fittingly coupled with the toast than his, as her eloquence at all times far surpassed his own.

This unexpected sally provoked a shout of laughter, and a fresh burst of applause, during which Jessy was fain to beat a hasty retreat. Not being near the door, however, she was obliged to take shelter behind the friendly back of Miss Errol, who was cruel enough to join in the laugh at her expense, while her offending brother brought his remarks to a close amid deafening cheers.

Supper then began. Sir Edward and Lady Doug las, followed by their friends, prepared to return to the other guests in the castle; but Jessy lingered behind, and insisted that Miss Errol should remain with her to witness the more lively part of the programme which would succeed the supper. This proposal was by no means welcome to that lady, who, seeing Ada Douglas at that moment leaving the room, accompanied by her brother Kenneth, was on the point of following, when Jessy, twitching her arm mysteriously, whispered: "Mary, you simpleton, don't you see they want to be alone!"

Miss Errol's large brown eyes opened wide at these words, which suddenly revealed to her a truth already suspected, and her face became so grave that Jessy burst into a fit of laughter, and was only restrained from further demonstrations by the presence of strangers.

As soon as supper was over, the table was removed, and dancing began. Harry Douglas, with a buxom, red-cheeked damsel on his arm, led off the first reel. Neil Gow's immortal tunes were effectively rendered by half-a-dozen fiddles, to whose accompaniment the feet of the dancers kept marked time; and, what with the lively music, the stamping, jumping, whirling, and the shouts and laughter with which the energetic movements were executed, Miss Errol was struck dumb with a feeling of mingled astonishment and dismay. Never before had a spectacle of such a lively description been witnessed by her. But when a

spruce young miller, advancing with a deferential bow to her companion, said: "Will ye tak' the floor, my leddy?" and Jessy, without hesitation, accepted his offered arm, she thought it time to make her escape.

But ere she reached the door Harry Douglas came up, saying he would escort her to the house as soon as his sister had finished the dance, if she would wait till then. Mary thanked him, and they stood surveying the animated scene, in which that young lady was mingling with evident enjoyment. But Harry's eyes reverted frequently to the face of his companion, whose puzzled expression seemed greatly to amuse him.

"I suppose I need hardly ask you to be my partner yonder?" he said, with a smile.

"I fear I would prove a sorry partner," she replied laughing, as she caught sight of her friend, whose gyrations at that moment were of the wildest description. "Look at your sister; are you not afraid she will get knocked down among these rough men?"

"Not she; she is like an eel. I must confess I never enjoyed a dance better in my life than this to-night. I see you are shocked, but I hate conventionality at all times, and here there is none of it. However, we must return to the house; there comes Jessy, and she will concur with me about the relative merits of conventional and unconventional dancing, if I am not mistaken."

"Oh, Mary! what fun!" exclaimed the laughing girl as she rejoined them. "It was really as delicious as the see-saw. Why, you're not going yet, surely?" she added, seeing her brother adjust Miss Errol's shawl.

But neither could be prevailed upon to remain, so very reluctantly she followed them out into the moonlight, across the sweeping lawn, to the dancing-room, from which rich strains of music floated out on the evening air.

Immediately on their entrance Lady Douglas came toward them. She was a graceful woman, rather above the average height, with a queenly bearing that would have distinguished her anywhere. In features she closely resembled her eldest daughter, and still retained so much of her youthful beauty that, seeing them together, anyone might have taken them for sisters.

She met them now with a look of mild surprise, and, addressing herself to her daughter, said:

"Where is Ada? Sir Reginald has been searching all the room for her. Did she not come with you?"

While Miss Errol looked surprised, and knew not what to say, Jessy promptly replied: "Oh, I know where she is, mamma, I'll fetch her immediately"; and, with a warning grimace to her astonished friend, she darted out at one of the windows which stood open to admit the air, and sped across the lawn, down several terraces, until she reached the garden, when she checked her pace, and began, with peculiar emphasis to warble some snatches of song, casting furtive glances the while upon a pleached alley near, as if therein she expected to find listeners.

CHAPTER V.

"LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM."

Who has not felt and owned the spell of an autumn evening lighted by the harvest-moon? When Mr. Kenneth Errol and his fair companion quitted the lively scene in the barn, it was with the intention of returning to the castle; but the night was radiantly beautiful, and they lingered to enjoy it. The moon at that moment had emerged from the clouds, and now shed its pale green, lustrous light around. In the deep violet sky the stars were brilliantly shining; the air was soft and balmy. only a passing breeze at times stirred the leaves of the trees, and wafted odours from the flowers in the garden below. Over the lawn the flickering shadows played, mocking every movement of the solitary pair as they passed along. But at a little distance the garish light of the dancing-room streamed forth from the long line of windows, and at sight of it they gradually slackened their pace. then finally halted, leaning over the balustrade that skirted the lawn.

For some minutes they remained thus in silence, until Kenneth Errol said: "What a glorious evening! It seems almost a hardship to leave such a scene for the heated dancing-room. Shall we go down to the gardens for a little before going in?"

Ada hesitated, but he drew her arm within his own, and led her down the broad white steps conducting from successive terraces to the gardens. Here for a while they strolled among the flowerbeds, redolent just now of autumn roses; but, wan-

dering on by degrees, they at length reached the lower part of the grounds, through which ran a brook. On they passed toward the rustic bridge which spanned it, halting there to lean over the parapet and listen to the silvery music of the water as it danced over the stones, sparkling in the moon-beams. No other sound broke the stillness of the calm evening. Above them hung the drooping tassels of the larches and the spreading branches of the limes, between which, as the breeze stirred them, fell in slanting shafts the moon's enchanting light. It was a fair scene, every detail of which was destined to live in the memory of each through life.

"How glad I am we came here," Kenneth broke silence by saying. "I think it must have been on such a night as this that Endymion fell in love with the moon, or the moon with Endymion, I forget which. You don't regret coming, do you, Ada? Let me wrap this mantle closer round you; the night air has its dangers."

"Thank you; I don't feel cold, but we must return; I shall be missed in the drawing-room," she said, essaying to move from his side.

But a firm clasp detained her hand, and, stepping closer, Kenneth addressed her in a voice soft and melodious as that of a charmer. " Not yet," he Headed, "not till you have heard something I have been longing to tell you. Ada," he continued, in tones tremulous and low, "it is surely no secret to you that I love you dearly, passionately? I have been silent hitherto only from a fear lest my poverty should prove an insuperable barrier to my suit; but some words I heard from your lips the other day, when you were talking to Mary, have emboldened me to speak. From them I learned that there are things more valuable in your eyes, and more necessary to your esteem, than wealth; and I now lay at your feet all that I possess, which is only the love of my heart. Will you accept of that poor offering, and wait for the rest? Ada, only speak the word, and the devotion of a lifetime will prove my gratitude."

All too powerfully the sweet pleading went to the girl's heart—even colder words would have found a ready entrance there—for he whose passionate words were breathed into her ear had for years been the idol of her worship. To her he was a being of another sphere; in his very presence there was a fascination possessed by no other on earth;

the sound of his voice, the glance of his eye, could stir within her bosoma rapturous joy, whose excess might have suggested danger. A spell seemed to invest all that he did or said, what he touched was henceforth sacred; the very ground he trod on became to her holy ground. His presence could transform the dullest day into heavenly brightness; in his absence, the brightest day was dark. In a word, he was the deity to whom was voluntarily surrendered the homage due to God alone. And was ever that surrender made but at the dearest cost?

Now, as she listened to his thrilling tones, and felt his warm breath on her cheek, the tumult of joy within her breast was such as to check the power of utterance. Heaven seemed to have opened, and the world, with all its dull routine of ordinary duties, to have vanished. The dream of many a wakeful night and pensive day was realised at last, and the long-sighed-for treasure won. It was a joy so exquisite as to border upon pain; and unable to restrain them, she burst into tears. But the tears were kissed from her cheek by eager, thirsty lips, and she was clasped to her lover's breast with impetuous fervour, as he poured out his passionate vows, and lavished every term of endearment that language could supply.

It was long ere either was calm enough to speak the thoughts that began to intrude and demand attention. The enchanting scene around them; the silence which the tinkling ripple of the brook hardly seemed to disturb, so harmonious was its music; the intensity of their own happiness-all combined to make them oblivious of the outer world of realities. Hours to them would have seemed but moments, and might have passed unheeded; but, alas! how soon the cup of joy is dashed from mortal lips! how brief the transports of bliss! While they lingered in their happy dream, they were rudely awakened by a sound that smote on their ears harshly as profane words uttered at a holy rite. In startled silence they listened, until Ada, disengaging herself from her lover's embrace, cried: "Oh, come; it is Jessy. We have been missed, and she has been looking for us. Oh, what shall I do?"

"Dearest, you have nothing to fear," was his reassuring answer; "our short absence need not excite any remark; we can return to the drawing-room separately, if you wish. Your sister will easily solve the difficulty, you may be sure."

That young lady now advanced and announced her errand. Often on previous occasions she had acted in the capacity of scout, and screened many a clandestine meeting, so that her sudden appearance was rightly construed as a sign of approaching danger.

"Ada, make haste," she cried; "mamma is inquiring for you. I volunteered to fetch you, and am just in time, I see. Let us go round to the east entrance, where you will be least observed. You, Mr. Errol, must enter by the lawn. Of course you were not likely to be missed."

For this disparaging remark the happy lover was about to imprison the detractor in a brotherly embrace, but she eluded his grasp, and kept at a safe distance until they reached the castle.

Fortunately Sir Reginald was standing by the door when they entered the room, and Ada was at once led off as his partner in a waltz. He was a slim, military gentleman, with a hooked nose and waxed moustache, and always walked as if he were at the head of his regiment. But, being fond of fun, and profuse in his attentions, he had been a favourite with the young Douglases from their childhood. He was distantly related to Lady Douglas, toward whom in the days gone by he had entertained warmer feelings than those of mere kinship; and perhaps it was her resemblance to her mother that made Ada his special pet. Certainly the smile with which he greeted her appearance betokened pretty clearly his delight and admiration. Never before had she looked so radiantly lovely, and he told her so with an emphasis that deepened the flush on her cheek.

But it was not in vanity she blushed; if she prized her beauty, it was only in so far as it enhanced her worth in the eyes of her lover. She saw him watching Sir Reginald's attentions with disapproving glances, and from that moment she ceased to derive any pleasure from them, wearving for the termination of the dance which would release her. Next time she looked, however, she beheld him in conversation with the dark-eyed lady in whose company he had been when first she entered the room that evening. Yet no longer did the sight move jealous fears, for the sweet words she had heard so recently from his lips still repeated themselves in her ears with a wondrous witchery. and under their spell she was proof against the whispers of doubt.

But, so soon as she was left alone, he was once more by her side; and when, shortly afterwards, the music of another waltz invited the dancers, he led her into the centre in conscious triumph.

Many an eye watched the two fair forms as they glided down the brilliant circle. The lamplight fell upon no such peerless faces among all that assemblage of youth and beauty. They hardly seemed to belong to a world of sorrow and suffering; and some there that night regarded them with feelings of vague foreboding, as though their happiness must be too bright to last. But those who so regarded them were the elderly pilgrims on life's journey, before whose eyes many a bright star had set, on whose radiance they had counted to cheer their onward steps.

Until sheer exhaustion impelled them, the blithe guests thought not of resting from their exhilarating exercise; but they were obliged at last to succumb to weariness; and then demands were made for a song. All who were known to have any vocal proficiency were thereupon besieged with urgent requests to gratify the company. One middle-aged addy especially was importuned to sing, as the fine quality of her voice, no less than the spirited rendering she was wont to give of Scotch songs, made her performances at all times welcome.

With good-natured alacrity she complied, and stepped up to the grand piano, among quite a crowd of admirers. Ada Douglas happened to be seated near the instrument, and the songstress, noticing Mr. Errol's close proximity, said, with a significant smile, that she was going to sing something for her benefit. Whereupon she began the following ballad:—

"Touch not the nettle, lest it should sting thee;
Waly sae green as the bracken grows;
Love not the lad that ye canna win,
For the bands o' love they are ill to loose,

"Love smiles sweetly in youth's early morning; Waly sae green as the bracken grows; But aft has he varied from kindness to scorning, Tho' the bands o' love they are ill to loose.

"See how the green leaves in summer drop round ye,
And sear, sear in autumn the bracken grows;
Then trust not love's smiles, and his frowns cannot
wound ye,
For the bands o' love they are ill to loose."

murmur of applause bailed the conclusion

A murmur of applause hailed the conclusion of the song, and urgent entreaties were heard on all sides for another; but the singer, who knew precisely how much vocal power she had at command, absolutely declined, and left the piano.

But as she turned away, she patted Ada on the shoulder, laughingly remarking: "Now, my dear, I hope you will remember that admirable sentiment, for 'the bands o' love they are ill to loose.' See that you help her, Mr. Errol," she added, with an arch nod at that young gentleman, who did not seem to appreciate the jest, though he promptly assured her he heartily endorsed the sentiment to which she had given such excellent expression.

Light words! and yet, like many such, destined to be remembered afterwards.

The festivities came to an end at last, however, and the guests began to depart.

In a short while the last carriage had rolled away, and silence reigned once more in Douglas Castle.

But there was one within its walls to whom night brought not rest. All through the still hours of darkness Ada lay awake, repeating, as if they had some mystical charm, the words her lover had spoken to her on the bridge in the moonlight. There was an ecstasy in the very memory of that hour so intense as to banish sleep, and she kept watching the stars in their course through the sky, likening them to the pure eyes of guardian angels who sympathised with her joy. Far on into the night she maintained her vigil, until the pale lustre of the stars was quenched in the returning brightness of a new day. Then, with happy tears on her cheek, she fell asleep, to behold again in dreams the rippling, shimmering brook, the waving branches of the trees, and the fair face bending over her in a rapture of joy and love.

(To be continued.)

THE LAST SWALLOW.

SWALLOW, borne on pinions fleet,
Over wood and wold,
Down the ways where Autumn's feet
Have left the print of gold.
Still the sunny moments smile,
Stay, oh, stay thy wings awhile!

Can'st thou all so soon forget,
Where the red rose cleaves,
Little nest, so featly set
'Neath the cottage caves?
Fear not yet the Winter's face
Tarry still a little space.

Yet we would not bid thee stay,
Fairer skies invite;
Winter creepeth on his way
Nearer every night.
Soon will frosts, on lea and lawn,
Dim the eyelids of the dawn.

Happy bird! The season's change Brings no change to thee; Free with rapid wing to range Every land and sea. Thine to find, in every clime, Everlasting Summer-time.

Soon shall Winter, cold and drear,
With his icy hand
Seize the last late blossoms here,
Over all the land.
Long his reign, but thou shalt bring,
After many days, the Spring.

Little pilgrim, favouring gales
Softly bear thee o'er,
From our Northern hills and dales
To some sunnier shore.
Fare thee well, till April's rain
Speed thy swift wing home again.



SUCCESS IN AUTHORSHIP.

By AN OLD PEN.

A N old story is told of the daughter of very uneducated parents, who, having been placed at a boarding school, was complained of by her teacher as unsatisfactory. "What your daughter wants, madam," said the schoolmistress to the mother, who was desirous of sparing no expense with regard to her daughter's education, "what your daughter wants, madam, is capacity."

"I will buy her one," promptly answered the mother, in good faith that capacity was an instrument or book of some kind that could be purchased for her daughter's use.

Now, capacity for being a satisfactory pupil or a successful author is not a thing that can be bought. Few readers of Atalanta will be so foolish as to think that it can be purchased, but still they do believe that there is something outside themselves that can make smooth their road to success.

I am far from deprecating the power of circumstances and the favourable conditions for literary work under which some aspirants more than others live, but still the capacity—talent—genius—call it what you will, *must* exist in the person, enabling him to correspond with adventitious environments or to rise above obstacles.

Mark! I do not say it is necessary for the mere purpose of rushing into print. If you care to say,

"'Tis pleasant sure to see one's name in print;
A book's a book, although there's nothing in it."

If it suffices you to get into print somehow, then

most assuredly you will succeed if you have sufficient vanity or money with which to do it.

Vanity—because many inferior class magazines will accept your work, however poor it may be, if it is at all readable, if you care to give it gratuitously. Money—because if you choose to spend it upon having your writing published, there is nothing to prevent your doing it.

But neither of these causes will result in the true success, which makes the real possessor of talent, however small that talent may be, one with the great world of writers.

A great many people will ask, how am I to know if I have talent or not?

Well, there are many ways of finding out.

First of all, what do you want to write for? However true it may be that want of money, the desire for fame, the longing to enter the ranks of literature may come into your reply, the first reason, the only one that justifies your attempting it, is if you have something to say.

If you have, whether it be the record of experience, the transcription of what your imagination gives you, or the imparting of something learnt yourself to write of, then by all means write it. What amuses you and interests you may amuse and interest others; and if you have something to say, then cast about to see how best you can put it into readable shape.

In doing this, several things have to be borne in mind, and some very commonplace hints may not come amiss to the tyro in literature. Use large paper, foolscap or post, and ruled with lines is the best. Leave a margin at least an inch wide top and bottom, and also at the left side. Write legibly. Do not abbreviate, and be most careful about your grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Many have been the manuscripts sent me by young aspirants showing the greatest carelessness with regard to these details of workmanship.

Want of finish is very adverse to the chance of success, for it is rare to find the genius whose power strikes one as being apparent under the disadvantage of inferior work.

A beginner should always copy out what he has written, and many veteran writers do so, even after years of experience. In any case, you should read your manuscript over most carefully before you send it, altering it as clearly as you can. It may be well to mention that alterations, legibly made, are quite admissible, and if you erase, you can do so as you please, only for the generally neat appearance of your work, to erase more than half a page is inadvisable. This great care in sending your MS. is necessary for several reasons. One is that it is a good passport to consideration, and another is that, if accepted, there will then be little to correct when it is in proof. Corrections made in proof cost a great deal, and it has been estimated than an author's corrections sometimes cost more than the original estimate for the printing. This with an overpressed genius may be permissible, but as a beginner you had better avoid leaving anything you can avoid not corrected.

As for caligraphy, that cannot be too clear. Two workmen are said to have gone blind in trying to decipher Balzac's bad writing, and for those who desire to succeed, great care cannot be too strongly insisted upon. Good writing, clear at least, can be acquired, but it requires time and patience to do it. It is well worth the time and trouble, and always tells in an author's favour.

Accuracy, care, legibility, and proper arrangement of your matter will go a long way toward ensuring your MS. being read, though, if you have no talent, I do not say that it will ensure acceptance. The question next comes, what to do with the manuscript when, finished and carefully paginated, with title, your name and address on fly leaf, it lies before you.

If you only had an introduction you think, that

would be everything. Everything it would not be, but I grant you that it is not to be despised; and if you have any friend who can introduce you to some editor or publisher likely to help you, then let him do so. It has this much value, that there are so many plagiarists, and so many persons are unscrupulous in adapting and literally stealing the work of others, which they attempt to pass off as their own, that an introduction is a sort of guarantee for the honesty of the author, and in some—not all—cases it hastens the consideration of the work.

But a great many people do not care for this, and my sympathies go with them in their independent desire to take their chance with the rest of the world, and be indebted only to their own judgment, talent, and perseverance if ever they succeed.

Adelaide Proctor, whose beautiful poems will sing through many ages, sent her first effort under a feigned name to "Household Words." Charles Dickens, then editor of that magazine, had known her father, but she preferred taking her chance with the rest of the writers, to having them accepted on that score. Of her Charles Dickens wrote:—

"Perhaps it requires an editor's experience of the profoundly unreasonable grounds on which he is often urged to accept unsuitable articles—such as having been to school with the sister's husband's brother-in-law, or having lent an alpenstock in Switzerland to the writer's wife's nephew, when that interesting stranger had broken his own—fully to appreciate the delicacy and the self-respect of this resolution."

To know where to send your manuscript can be discovered by using your common sense. People send articles and stories to magazines and publishers, often most unsuitable to the style and matter of their work, however excellent it may be in other ways. If you think your effort will do for a magazine, then do not send it off haphazard to the first magazine you happen to think of. Study the lines of many publications, see their style and the kind of articles they issue, and when you come to one you think will answer, then send your manuscript. Magazines vary as do their rules, and you will often find that would-be contributors are requested to send stamps for return of the manuscript should it prove ineligible.

If in sending your MS. you also write to the editor, remember to write courteously. The imperative mood is not one likely to pre-dispose him in your favour, and if you do not get an answer for some time and write to inquire, do so politely. Sometimes your MS. may be kept under consideration—or rather waiting to be examined—for months. At others you will receive the manuscript back, or tidings of its acceptance in a few days. Each house and every magazine has its respective way of managing matters, and you must submit with the best grace at your command to delay, which is often trying to your patience and temper as well.

It is the fashion with many—particularly unsuccessful authors—to speak of editors and publishers as if they were a class existing for the torment of aspirants and the cruel treatment of anthors. Now the world in general will treat you very much as you treat it, and if you act with courtesy and consideration towards editors and publishers you will generally receive back the same in return. Generally, not always, for there are exceptions, but my experience of many years has been most favourable, and the business acquaintance has often developed into the personal friend. Many a writer can echo this experience.

Should your manuscript be declined it is no cause for despondency though it may be for disappointment. Had you any idea of the enormous amount of manuscripts sent to average magazines you would not be surprised.

This, too, should be borne in mind by the author who desires to make his way, that literature is work. You may hear of someone who sits down to his desk and writes an article or story in a marvellously short space of time, and with ease that seems almost miraculous. But in nearly all cases labour has preceded this apparently toilless effort. All the powers of the mind have been engaged in preparing the way for this speed and ease.

A true writer is always writing, that is to say, he is ever studying men and things, and cultivating his almost priceless possession, strong powers of observation. He collects data from all sources—books, people, things—and the like in his commonplace book as in his mind, he has material for what he is going to work at.

Sir Walter Scott's rapidity in working is noted, but it is only equalled by his great carefulness and accuracy in preparation. When he was writing "Rokeby," he visited a Mr. Morritt, saying he wanted to study "a good robbers' cave, and an old church of the right sort." Mr. Morritt says:—

"We rode out in quest of these, and he found what he wanted in the ancient slate quarries of Brignall, and the ruined abbey of Egglestone. I observed him noting down the peculiar little wild flowers and herbs, that, as it happened, grew round and on the side of a bold craig near his intended cave of Guy Denzil, and could not help saying that as he was not to be upon oath in his work, daisies, violets, and primroses would be as poetical as any of the humble plants he was examining. I laughed, in short, at his scrupulousness, but understood him when he replied, 'That in nature herself no two scenes are exactly alike, and that whoever copies truly what was before his eyes, would possess the same variety in his descriptions and exhibit, apparently, an imagination as boundless as the range of nature in the scenes he recorded. Whereas whoever trusted to imagination would soon find his own mind circumscribed and contracted to a few favourite images; and the repetition of these would sooner or later produce that very monotony and barrenness which had always haunted descriptive poetry in the hands of any but the patient worshippers of truth. "

Moore, it may be remembered, spent eighteen months in reading Greek and Persian works for "Lalla Rookh," and as a result of this, he described oriental life with such accuracy, that it was hard to many to believe that he had not written it exactly on the spot.

I have quoted these instances as illustrations of the fact that genius demands work, and that the aspirant to literature, if he possess it, or only a small share of talent, cannot dispense with it. If, after taking pains, and doing what he can, he still fails, it will be only reasonable to believe that in thinking literature was his vocation, he has made a mistake.

One word in conclusion. If you have talent, work and hope, and remember, "it's dogged as does it." If you only want to write as a pastime, and with no consciousness of talent, wish to succeed without any special labour, then if you ask me if you should go on wasting time, ink, and paper, I would quote Mr. Punch's advice to those about to marry—" Don't!"

THE ATALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

Subject for October-" Is the position of woman improved by attempting professional equality with men?" Papers not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before October 25th. The best paper on either side will be published in the magazine. (See pages at end of this number for rules.)

READING UNION AND SCHOOL OF FICTION.

Give an estimate of the character of Beatrice in Much Ado about Nothing. Write a Rispetto on Love. Analyse the feelings of a girl overwhelmed by a great calamity. (Members need only enter for one of these subjects. Reply papers not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before October 25th.)

SEARCH QUESTIONS (OCTOBER).

I.

Whence are the following quotations taken?-

"Darker storms the mountain sweep, Redder lightning rend the skies.

"The world is grown old, and trembles for fear; For sorrows abound, and judgment is near!"

"Above, beneath us, and around, The dead and living swell the sound."

Give authors of Melaia; The Induction; Clifton Grove; The Undying One.

Give authors of following, and name works :-

"And this maiden she lived with no other thought Than to love and be loved by me.'

> "But oh! when evening's virgin queen Sits on her virgin throne serenc, And mingling whispers rising near Still on the still reposing ear.

"I wëant brëak rules fur Doctor, a knaws naw moor nor a floy;

Git ma my aale I tell tha, an' if I mun doy I mun doy."

IV.

In what work do Messrs. Gamfield, Brownlow, and Sowerberry appear?

To whom and by whom are these lines written ?-

"Oh! multifarious man! Thou wondrous, admirable Kitchen Crichton."

VI.

1. What is the allusion in this couplet ?-

"Fresh as the fountain underground, When first 'tis by the lapwing found."

2. Give poem and author.

VII.

1. What event is referred to in these lines ?-

"Alas for Sicily! rude fragments now Lie scattered where the shapely column stood. Her palaces are dust."

2. Give work and author.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH OUESTIONS (SEPTEMBER).

1. A famous outlaw of the North of England (see Percy's Reliques). 2. Shakespeare in Much Ado about Nothing.

1. Mercutio. 2. Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet.

Marriages, by Crabbe; The Brothers, ibid; Law, ibid.

1. To the Presbyterian clergy, who were trying to persuade Cromwell to use the secular power against Sectaries. 2. Sonnet to Cromwell, by Milton.

1. John Bunyan. 2. Macaulay's essay on The Pilgrim's Progress.

VI.
1. Moore's Lalla Rookh. 2. The birds of the Bosphorus, called by the French "les ames damnees," because they are never known to rest.

1. To the Magna Charta, granted at Runnymede. 2. Expostulation, by Cowper.

1. Alastor; Prometheus Unbound; Ode to a Skylark. 2. Shelley





Engraved by Messrs. André & Sleigh. IN MY STUDIO.

Alma Tadema, R.A.



By R. D. Blackmore.

In Two Parts.

PART II.-EVE.

Meanwhile through lowland, holt, and glade, Sad Eve her lonely travel made; Not fierce, or proud, but well content To own the righteous punishment; Yet found, as gentle mourners find, The heart's confession soothe the mind.

ī.

"Ye valleys, and ye waters vast,
Who answer all that look on you
With shadows of themselves, that last
As long as they, and are as true—
Where hath he past?

"Oh woods, and heights of rugged stone,
Oh weariness of sky above me,
For ever must I pine and moan,
With none to comfort, none to love me,
Alone, alone?

"Thou bird, that hoverest at heaven's gate,

Or cleavest limpid lines of air.
Return—for thou hast one to care—
Return to thy dear mate.

2.

"For me, no joy of earth or sky,
No commune with the things I see,
But dreary converse of the eye
With worlds too grand to look at me—
No smile, no sigh!

"In vain I fall upon my knees,
In vain I weep and sob for ever;
All other miseries have ease,
All other prayers have ruth—but never
Any for these.

"Are we endowed with heavenly breath,
And God's own form, that we should
win
A proud priority of sin

A proud priority of sin, And teach creation death?

3.

"Nay, that is too profound for me,
Too lofty for a fallen thing;
More keeuly do I feel than see,
Far liefer would I, than take wing,
Beneath it be.

"The night—the dark—will soon be here,
The gloom that doth my heart appal so!
How can I tell what may be near?
My faith is in the Lord—but also
He hath made fear.

"I quail, I cower, I strive to flee;
Though oft I watched, without
affright,
The stern magnificence of night,
When Adam was with me.

4.

"My husband! Ah, I thought sometime
That I could do without him well,
Communing with the heaven at prime,
And in my womanhood could dwell
Calm and sublime.

"Declining, with a playful strife,
All thoughts below my own transcendence,

All common-sense of earth and life,
And counting it a poor dependence
To be his wife.

"But now I know, by trouble's test,
How little my poor strength can bear,
What folly wisdom is, whene'er
The grief is in my breast!

5

"The grief is in my breast, because
I have not always been as kind
As woman should, by nature's laws,
But showed sometimes a wilful mind,
Carping at straws.

"While he, perhaps, with larger eyne
Was pleased, instead of vexed, at seeing
Some little petulance in mine,
And loved me all the more, for being
Not too divine.

"Until the pride became a snare,
The reason a deceit, wherein
I dallied face to face with sin,
And made a mortal pair.

6.

"Dark sin, the deadly foe of love,
All bowers of bliss thou shalt infest,
Implanting thorns the flowers above,
And one black feather in the breast
Of purest dove.

"Almighty Father, once our friend,
And ready even now to love us,
Thy pitying gaze upon us bend,
And through the tempest-clouds above
us

Thine arm extend.



BINDING HER HAIR.

" That so thy children may begin
In lieu of bliss, to earn content,
And find that sinful Eve was meant
Not only for a sin."

Awhile she ceased; for memory's flow Had drowned the utterance of woe; Until a young hind crossed the lawn, And fondly trotted forth her fawn, Whose frolics of delight made Eve, As in a weeping vision, grieve.

7.

"For me, poor me, no hope to learn
That sweeter bliss than Paradise,
The joy that makes a mother yearn
O'er that bright message from the skies
Her pains do earn.

"She stoops entranced: she fears to stir,
Or think; lest e'en a thought endanger
(While two enraptured hearts confer)
That wonderful and wondering stranger,
Come home to her.

"He watches her, in solemn style;
A world of love flows to and fro;
He smiles; that he may learn to know
His mother by her smile.

8.

"Oh, bliss, that to all other bliss
Shall be as sunrise unto night,
Or heaven to such a place as this,
Or God's own voice, with angels bright,
To serpent's hiss!

"Have I betrayed thee, or cast by
The pledge in which mysoul delighted—
That all this wrong, and misery,
Should be avenged at last, and righted,
And so should I?

"Belike, they look on me as dead,
Those fiends that found me soft and
sweet;

But Godhath promised me one treat— To crush that serpent's head!

_

"Revenge! Oh, heaven, let some one rise,
Some woman, since revenge is small,—
Who shall not care about its size,
If only she can get it all,
For those black lies!

"Poor Adam is too good and great,
I felt it, though he said so little—
To hate his foes, as I can hate—
And pay them every jot, and tittle,
At their own rate.

"For was there none but I to blame?
God knows that if, instead of me,
There had been any other she,
She would have done the same.

10.

"Poor me! Of course, the whole disgrace,
In spite of reason, falls on me:
And so all women of my race,
In pure right, shall be reason-free,
In every case.

"It shall not be in power of man
To bind them to their own contentions;
But each shall speak, as speak she can,
And start anew with fresh inventions,
Where she began.

"And so shall they be dearer still;
For man shall no'er suspect in them
The plucking of the fatal stem,
That brought him all his ill.

11.

"And when hereafter—as there must,
Since He, that made us, so hath sworn—
From that whereof we are, the dust,
And whereunto we shall return
In higher trust—

"There spring a grand and countless race,
Replenishing this vast possession,
Till life hath won a larger space
Than death, by quick and fair succession
Of health and grace;

"They too shall find as I have found
The grief, that lifts its head on high,
A dewy bud the sun shall dry—
But not while on the ground.

12.

"Then men shall love their wives again,
Allowing for the frailer kind,
Content to keep the heart's Amen,
Content to own the turns of mind
Beyond their ken.



THE MEETING.

"And wives shall in their lords be blest,
Their higher sense of right perceiving
(When possible) with love their test;
Exalting, solacing, believing
All for the best.

"And for the best shall all things be, If God once more will shine around, And lift my husband from the ground,

And teach him to lift me."

New faith inspired the first of wives, She smiles, and drooping hope revives; She scorns a hundred years of woe, And binds her hair, because the breezes blow.

THE MEETING.

I.

The wind is hushed, the moon is bright,
More stars on heaven than may be told;
Young flowers are coying with the light,
That softly tempts them to unfold,
And trust the night.

What form comes bounding from above Down Arafa, the mountain lonely, Afraid to scare its long-lost dove, Yet swift as joy—"It can be only, Only my love!"

What shape is that—too fair to leave On Arafa, the mountain lone? So trembling, and so faint—"My own,

It must be my own Eve!"

2

As when the mantled heavens display

The glory of the morning glow,

And spread the mountain heights with

day

And bid the clouds and shadows go Trooping away.

The Spirit of the Lord arose,
And made the earth and heavens to
quiver,

And scattered all His hellish foes,

And deigned His good stock to deliver

From all their woes.

So long the twain had strayed apart,
That each as at a marvel gazed,
With eyes abashed, and brain amazed;
While heart inquired of heart.

3.

Our God hath made a fairer thing
Than fairest dawn of summer day—
A gentle, timid, fluttering,
Conferring glance, that seeks alway

Confessing glance, that seeks alway, Rest for its wing.

A sweeter sight than azure skies,
Or golden star thereon that glideth;
And blest are they who see it rise,
For if it cometh, it abideth,
In woman's eyes.

The first of men such blessing sued;
The first of women smiled consent;
For husband, wife, and home it meant,
And no more solitude!

1.

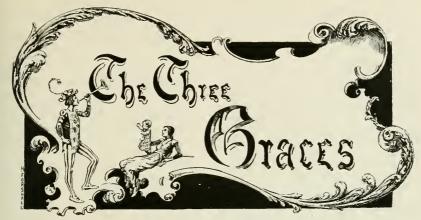
We trainple now the faith of old,
We make our Gods of dream and doubt;
Yet life is but a tale untold,
Without one heart to love, without
One hand to hold.

The fairer half of humankind—
More gentle, playful, and confiding;
Whose soul is not the slave of mind,
Whose spirit hath a nobler guiding
Than we can find.

So Eve restores the sweeter part Of what herself unwitting stole, And makes the wounded Adam whole;

For half the mind is heart.





By MRS. HUNGERFORD,

Author of "Molly Bawn," "Phyllis," "The Hoyden," Sec.

CHAPTER V.

"And thou betrayest allë secretness:

Thy mind is lorn, thou janglest as a jay,
Thy face is turned in a new array."

BATTY—to Janie, it seems impossible even now not to call him "Betty"—proves full of talk as they go towards the house. That the girl is very silent seems not to check the ardour of his discourse in the smallest degree. He is evidently enjoying himself to the full, whilst Janie is suffering tortures.

Good gracious! What will they say at home? What will father say?—and auntie? Why it is enough to make even Madge "sit up"—Madge, who, as a rule, is invulnerable where the emotions come in.

As they turn the last corner of the avenue, that brings not only the noble old house but the tennis courts below into full view, Janet's last remnants of courage entirely forsake her.

"If you don't mind," says she, stopping short in the middle of the avenue, "I think I'll leave you here."

"But why here?" asks her cousin, very reasonably surprised.

"Why not here?" says Janie, pointing to the entrance to 'The Court'; "the door is over there, and you can find your own way in, can't you?"

"Well, it seems simple," says Mr. O'Grady, looking favourably at the magnificent old oak doorway that is now, as it usually is, lying wide open, betraying visions of the cool, grand hall within.

"Yes—isn't it?" says Janie, catching at anything, and too upset to take umbrage at the note of amusement in his tone. "Well, go on then; Miles (the butler) will tell you where to go, and all the rest of it."

"But your father-"

"He's out, I——" hope is on the tip of her tongue, but she puts in "I'm afraid" just in the nick of time. She moves away from him; "Goodbye for the present," says she.

"The present is likely to lose a great deal of its charm," says he, regarding her ruefully. "Is this how you are going to treat your new-found Betty?—that was the name, wasn't it?"

"It was," says Janie, "but you see I haven't found her. There, go indoors; they'll make you quite comfortable, and you'll like to make yourself a bit—er—tidy, don't you know, before you meet auntie."

"Good heavens!" says he; "am I as bad as all that?" He gives an eager look round at his clothes, then calls after her, "Where are you going?"

"Over there," pointing in the direction of the tennis court, where O'Grady can see some forms moving to and fro.

"Over there?"

"Yes, to explain to them."

"Explain-to them?"

"About your coming," says she, with some impatience. Why on earth doesn't he go into the house? Papa may be over there, too, and if he is, and she should bring up this unexpected and dreadfully masculine "Betty" without a word of explanation, there will probably be "wigs on the green" in no time.

"I think I'd like to explain that myself," says he, with a view to taking the trouble off her shoulders, but she makes a little gesture that almost looks like pushing him back.

"Well, you can't," says she. "And at all events you *shan't*. I've quite made up my mind about *that*." She looks indeed distinctly formidable. "I have told you your coming will be a surprise, and I must break it to them gently——"

"But firmly," puts in Mr. O'Grady, giving his advice with emphasis.

"They have all been expecting a girl. Papa I'm afraid will take it badly. He endures girls, but he hates boys." She stops and regards him with a mournful eye. "You aren't even that," says she.

"Janie, is this kind?" asks he, in a grieved tone.
"If I'm neither girl nor boy—what am 1? In
this age I thought there were only three genders,
the man, the woman, and the bore. You make
out a new lot, the girl, the boy, and—what am 1?"

"I know what you'll be in another moment if you don't go in," says Janie, with really astounding aplomb.

"Yes?"

"A dead man!"

At this he turns and flies, as if struck with horror, and she, running across the lawn, arrives breathless beside her aunt and Madge, to find to her comfort that her father is not there after all.

"Oh! auntie, such a story as I have got to tell you."

"A story!" says Madge, giving way to mirth. And then with preternatural gravity, "I must say, Janie, after all the care that has been taken with your bringing up——"

"Pouf! Put your head in a bag," says Janie.

"Just listen to this. Betty is not a Betty after

"What!" from Mrs. Egerton and Madge in a breath. "You've met her."

"Yes-she-he-is come!"

"What on earth are you trying to say, Janie? If she isn't a Betty what is she?"

"A Batty!"

"A boy?" says Mrs. Egerton, faintly.

"Worse—far worse—a young man!"

"Good gracious! who is going to tell your father?" says Mrs. Egerton, when the first shock is over.

"You, of course," says Madge. "And I think you had better do it at once, too. Where is our white elephant now, Janie?"

"I sent him indoors. I was afraid papa was here,"

"Indoors—and up to his—to Betty's room? Oh!" groans Madge, with sudden painful remembrance. "Think of the pincushions! and the little pink bows put everywhere, and the flowers——"

"He'll think he is going to be married," says Mrs. Egerton, giving way to a suffocating burst of laughter.

"He'll be out in a moment," says Janie, who is craning her body over the stone wall, lined with creepers and evergreens, that lies on one side of the court, and that from the top commands a full view of the house. "Yes—" with a little scream; "here he comes." She is now in imminent danger of breaking her neck, and Madge hauls her back with stern determination. "He is very good-looking, do you know—he is really—in spite of——"

"Of what? Do be quick—he's coming,"

"His eyes," hurriedly. "They are small and green, and his nose is anyhow, and his hair is the blackest thing you ever saw, and——"

"He *must* be good-looking indeed!" begins Madge, sarcastically, but there is no time to say more. The foe is upon them.

Mrs. Egerton rises and goes to meet him.

"So you are not a girl after all," says she, laughing. "Janie has been giving us a most graphic account of you."

"I expect it was those telegraph people who were to blame," says O'Grady, laughing. "A letter here or there to them is of little consequence."

"I hope it won't make any consequence to you either," says Mrs. Egerton, hospitably.

"How can I tell? Already," he glances at Janie, "I have been termed an impostor."

"Was that Janie?" asks Madge, laughing.

"Yes, it was," says Janie, indignantly. "But," with a wrathful glance at O'Grady, "I think you needn't have told them about it."

"I think so too," returns he cheerfully; "but you see an impostor is never to be depended upon. I'll have to give up that pose, and go in for strict virtue, then I'll never make any mistakes."

Mrs. Egerton has been supplying him with tea and cakes—he seems fond of cakes—and now she grows solicitous as to his health.

"I hope the passage was a good one," says she, alluding to the voyage between Kingstown and Holyhead, "and that you didn't suffer much."

"Not much," he assures her.

There seems to be a little hesitation in his speech, and as he looks at her, his air somehow conveys to her the impression that he is holding back something that he would rather die than tell.

"You are a bad sailor, then?" says she, sympathetically; the look of the mildest wave upsets her!

"No. I'm afraid that can't be counted among my many virtues."

"Oh! then a good sailor, perhaps?"

"Why, neither good nor bad," says he.

"Oh! you must be one or the other," says

"I'm very sorry, but I'm not, indeed," says Mr. O'Grady, mildly. "I'm not a sailor at all, I'm a land agent, or rather going to be one. That's why the governor has sent me over to your father: 'To learn my trade,' he says. He's of the opinion that English landlords know more than Irish ones; do they? And he wants me to study farming here for a few months—if you'll have me."

There's a second's silence. For a few months! A young man in the house with the squire for a few months. Mrs. Egerton is the first to recover.

"We shall, of course, be delighted to have you," says she. Which is quite true. They will—but the *squire!*

"That's all right, then," says Mr. O'Grady, with charming bonhomie, smiling placidly upon the faces round him, who smile back at him, with terror dimly veiled behind their would-be cheerful glances. Good gracious! what is going to be the upshot of it all?

"I don't think I quite answered your kind question," says O'Grady, turning to Mrs. Egerton again. "I really had a delightful passage, thank you, and a very charming reception at the end of it." He looks at Madge, and from her to Janie, and back again. "As a rule I have not been treated to pincushions when 'taking my walks abroad,' and as for the flowers—when I got into the room so kindly allotted to me, I felt like Celia in her arbour. But I liked the pincushions best. Perhaps I'm not so accustomed to them. So thoughtful of——" He looks at Madge—"You?"

She shakes her head.

"Ah! you, then?" to Janie.

"I stuck the pins in them," returns she, most ungraciously.

"Oh! those pins!" says he, with radiant appreciation. "I saw 'Welcome' written by them on one pincushion, 'Betty' on the other—'Welcome, Betty!' It seemed to me quite an ovation!"

"It wasn't meant for you," says Janie, now driven out of all the paths of courtesy.

"I saw that, also," says Mr. O'Grady, now positively beaming upon her; "and I felt sure you would like to rectify the mistake when I came, so I got a few more pins and changed the 'e' into 'a.' Now it is 'Welcome, Batty,' and I feel so proud. It took me quite a long time to do it, but I usually"—with a modest air—"surmount most of my difficulties."

"Madge, your cousin will take another cup of tea," says Mrs. Egerton, rising; her heart is beating a little quickly. Just over there, on his way to the stables, providentially she sees the squire, and, trembling, she moves across the lawn to tell him all about it.

The squire, when told, is, as she had known he would be, like a ramping, roaring, lion.

"There was a mistake about the name. John," says she, as she faces him in the library; she had made him come back to the house—it was impossible to let him storm in the yard, with the grooms looking on. "It's not a daughter that has come—it's—a—a son!"

"IVhat!" says Grace, as if not believing his senses.

"Yes, indeed."

"Not a girl?"

"N--0!"

" A boy ? "

"No, not so much a boy, either—though a little boyish in his ways—a young man about twentythree or so."

"Then back he goes this minute," says the squire, with a fling of his hand on the table.

"Not quite this minute, I hope," says she, with dignity; "you will give your cousin's son some dinner, I suppose?"

Her calmness always checks him, he pauses, and, as he does, one of the men enters with the evening post. The squire tears off the envelope from one letter, and runs his eyes over it rapidly.

"H'm, h'm! 'Send him here to learn farming—collecting of rents. Hope you will give him valuable hints—will eventually have large property when I am gone '—pish! 'And would like him to know how to manage it better than I have done.' H'm, h'm! 'Think it good plan to make him work as land-agent for a few years; and Lord Carmore—an old friend of mine—is willing to give him a trial on one of his estates.' H'm!" The squire flings down the letters. "The devil is in it, Henrietta! How am I to refuse O'Grady in this matter?"

"We must think," says Mrs. Egerton, bringing her pretty brows together.

"Of course he can't stay here."

"Of course not," with immense emphasis.

"If," presently, "he did stay here—"

"My dear John-what are you thinking of?"

"Well, why not—why not?" angrily. "Good heavens! if I can't have my own cousin's son here, who can I have?"

"But the girls-think of the girls!"

"Pouf! a boy like that?"

"Twenty-three!"

"A mere lad-and with you to look after them."

"Ah! I never thought of that," says Mrs. Egerton, who is now choking with laughter. How many times in his wrathful moments has he told her she is not of any sort of use at all in that way?

But now the squire has changed his mood, and has gone off on the old track.

"They needn't think of entering into a flirtation with this — this intruder," says he. ("They" always mean Madge and Janie.") "I'll take good care his time is well employed. If he has been sent to learn English farming, I'll see that he does

it. I'll have no idle young man lounging about my house. Already there are too many of them coming, and going. It seems you are expecting these two Brandes to-morrow—for to-morrow only, remember, Henrietta. Of the coming of these silly young fools there seems to be no end. And even age doesn't seem to hold them back. I've noticed lately that William Eyre, whom I thought a sensible sort of fellow, has been coming pretty constantly."

Mrs. Egerton, stooping, picks up a pen off the carpet. It takes her some time to do it.

"He's not a chicken, anyway," says the squire; "forty if a day. Is it Madge he is after?"

"1—don't think so," says Mrs. Egerton, who has now restored the pen to its place. The stooping for it under the table has considerably heightened her colour.

"1 do," says the squire. He pauses. "After that child! Well! *IIe's* an ass if ever 1 met one."

"He's not!" says Mrs. Egerton. This is perhaps the shortest speech that has ever emanated from her, and the squire stares as if hardly comprehending.

"It is you who are so stupid," says she, with some slight confusion, now seeing he is looking at her. "Why can't you accept things as they come? This—this young cousin of yours, Batty O'Grady, who is coming to stay here for some months——"

"Months!" roars the squire.

"Yes, months," indignantly. She has in a measure lost her usually perfect temper, though she herself hardly knows why. "And why not? He is your cousin—belonging to you. He's not a viper, or a serpent, I suppose, because he belongs to your sex."

"I don't care what he is; he's a swindle, anyway," says the squire; "a perfect fraud. He comes here as a girl, and now ——" He strikes his hand upon the open letter. . . . "And as for you, Henrietta, instead of attacking me I think you ought to feel distinctly ashamed of yourself. Where is your 'little Betty' now, eh?" mimicking her tone of a former occasion. "The little small pale cousin we were expecting? Eh?"

"Out on the tennis ground taking tea with the girls," says Mrs. Egerton, gathering up her skirts and marching out of the room with considerable dignity.

CHAPTER VI.

"In Flauders whilom was a company Of youngë folkës."

The squire, to mark his disapproval of the coming of the Brandes, has gone away to a distant farm to see about some improvements on it, and to worry the natives, no doubt. He had shown symptoms of desire to take Batty with him, with a view to starting him on his studies, but the young man had "held tight," as he himself expressed it, and had pleaded fatigue, which, considering his long journey of yesterday, had something in it.

The squire's departure has proved a distinct relief—which providentially he did not know, or certainly he would not have gone a-visiting his tenants to-day. To-day that is like a dream of joy—so soft—so warm. Out here on the lawn the sunbeams are playing delicate games in and out between the branches of the great chestnut-tree that stands near the steps which lead down to the tennis courts. And from the parterres to the left the sweet heavy perfume of the roses comes to one with every passing breeze. Roses of every kind, of every hue, bedeck the place—climbing the ancient walls, laughing through the trellises, and playing bo-peep with each other through the pillars that lead to the verandah up above.

Roses—roses everywhere! And all old-world roses; and, therefore, richest in perfume and in memories! There the climbing roses red, and yellow, and orange; and, here in the beds, the rose Celeste, whose buds are sweetest and truest pink of all; and here the rose Unique, with its soft white face and delicate bloom so easily destroyed; and over there the moss rose in its velvet setting; and here, close by, the gorgeous cabbage rose, whose heart contains, above all other roses, the very soul of summer: a rose once breathed never to be forgotten. Oh! queen of flowers, so justly named, I, for one, give you for ever homage:—

"From the depths of the green garden closes
Where summer in darkness dozes,
Till autumn pluck from his hand
An hour-glass that holds not a sand;
From the maze that a flower-belt encloses
To the stones and sea-grass on the strand,
How red was the reign of the roses
Over the rose-crowned land!"

The girls, Madge and Janie, have come down to the lawn with Mrs. Egerton to wait for the expected guests. They had implored Vincent to come with them, though with little hope of success, but she had entreated them to let her wait until they came. "Yes, yes," nervously; "she knew it looked a little ungracious, but she would come down later—she would, *indteal*—when the others came." Those "others" whom she had never seen—whom she never—

Mrs. Egerton and the girls had been a little surprised at her promising to come at all, and very glad of it.

"Oh! there you are, Batty," cries Madge, as Mr. O'Grady comes into view in fresh white flannels and his usual beaming smile. "What a lovely get up. Anyone would have thought you would have taken more time than you have over such an elaborate toilette."

Batty grins, and flings himself on the grass beside Janet, who has disdained to take any notice of his "beauty." He would, perhaps, have answered Madge according to her words, but that her eyes have left his, and are now concentrated on an opening in the shrubberies far away over there.

All at once she rises, and with a casual air strolls towards the opening mentioned. The laurels hide her presently, and walking a little quicker she comes presently face to face with a young man, who is advancing towards her at quite an unusually eager pace.

He is tall, slender, athletic, and singularly young in appearance, younger than his years warrant; but perhaps the absence of any hirsute growth about his face, beyond a slight moustache that barely hides his handsome mouth, helps to give this impression.

"I saw you coming," says Madge, who has a good deal of honesty in her disposition, and necessarily very little subjection; "and I came to meet you."

"You did?" The young man, Victor Mowbray, having taken her hand, holds it. "The Brandes told me they were coming this afternoon, and so I took heart of Grace. Your father," with a smile that lights up his beautiful, youthful face, "will not see much worse in three than in two."

He is still holding her hand—very closely now—but Madge says nothing; she is looking, not at him, but at the ground, and stands silent as though a spell has been cast over her.

"Was I wrong?" asks he, gently, partly releasing her hand.

"Oh, no, no!" she says this quickly—suddenly. And suddenly, too, she lifts her eyes to his. There is a little happy gleam in them, that his eyes, gazing into hers, catch—and now they are both smiling at each other, fingers intertwined.

"And for one thing," says she, laughing, softly; "Papa isn't here to-day; so you need not have had all those wonderful imaginings about him."

" No?"

"No!" She pauses, and makes a little attempt to draw her hand away; but so little a one, that he holds on to it valiantly. "And for another thing," says she: "Why didn't you come before?"

"Was I asked?"

"I think so."

"Oh! by Mrs. Egerton, perhaps, and that very casually, but—by you?"

"Will you never come unless I ask you?"

"I shall never care to come, unless you ask me,"

"Yet you are here to-day."

"Ah!" Unconsciously but strongly, still holding her hand, he draws her to him. "My strength was insufficient," says he.

At this they both give way to laughter, low, nervous, happy, the little broken laugh that only lovers know, and the two heads grow closer together and the two handsome faces look and look, and look—until—Victor Mowbray finds himself pushed hurriedly backwards by a girl, whose face is still happy, but now sweetened by a little blush.

Had he been going to-to-

She has turned abruptly, and is now going back to the tennis courts, and he following her, they soon find themselves in the open, where Mrs. Egerton and Janie can be seen welcoming two young men, who have apparently only just arrived.

"Those must be the Brandes," says Madge, in some surprise.

" Ves."

"You know them?"

"I have met them twice only. They are twins, you know. But look at them—could you imagine any two brothers so unlike in appearance?"

Madge standing still for a moment, scrutinizes them closely. Yes, they are unlike, singularly unlike in every way; one—tall, dark, emaciated, and something else too. Intense is the word that seems to suit him, in a way, but yet when one comes to think of it, in a way that is not really his. A saint rather—a medieval saint, with his eager, earnest eyes, and white calm face.

As for the other, Madge at once decides he is more human, if not half so good-looking. Tom Brande, indeed, at this moment is a distinct contrast to his brother Cedric; he has turned to speak more directly to Mrs. Egerton, and a full view of his face can be got from where Madge is standing. A strong face—dark too—but without special beauty of any kind. A man evidently to be liked by the many, loved by the few; a man to be trusted, in evil days as in the good, and with no shadow of uncertainty in all his dealings.

"Dear Victor-so glad to see you," says Mrs. Egerton, greeting Mowbray with her kindliest smile; "so good of you to come. Mr. Grace is away, gone up to the Litton's farm to inspect the crops, he says, but to get a new pansy from Mrs. Litton, I feel sure. You know his craze for pansies, and it seems Mrs. Litton, in some extraordinary way, has got one that is quite the pride of the country-side." In the middle of her gay little speech she whispers something hurriedly to Janie, who darts away from her to the house, "I have just sent for Vincent," whispers she to Victor; "she has promised to our astonishment to come out for tea. You haven't met our new cousin, Batty O'Grady, yet, have you? But I assure you he has had already a most wonderfully good effect upon Vincent. It is the funniest thing in the world, but I assure you he refuses to see there is anything out of the way with her-and it seems to please her, poor child-to give her courage. I am afraid now that I look back on it all, that we have been a little too-well-too solicitous for her happiness, if you can understand me."

"I can, I can," says Mowbray—he breaks off—
"Here she comes," he says.

Mrs. Egerton follows his glance anxiously. Across the lawn, and now quite near to them, a young girl is coming, one hand leaning lightly on Janie's arm. Mrs. Egerton's sharp turn has, perhaps, made all the others turn too, and whether that was the cause or no, now all eyes are fixed on the coming two. Who is this other girl, so slim, so slender, with such soft wide eyes—eyes with a depth impossible to reach? Tom Brande, watching

her, takes a deep breath. Was ever girl before so lovely? He had thought Madge a pretty girl—even more than pretty, and Janie a girl who might be even beautiful—but *this* girl—

Nearer she comes, leaning always lightly on Janie's arm, and now a little emotion stirs the features, that, it suddenly occurs to Tom Brande, have been kept by their owner in a studied calm, which has cost her somewhat dear. She turns, whispering something to Janie, who presses her arms against her side reassuringly, and then the beautiful face recovers its calm again.

And now she is with them, and Mrs. Egerton is introducing her to the two Brandes; she holds out her hand, and Tom, being the nearest to her, takes it.

He has never once, since her coming across the grass, removed his gaze from her eyes, and now as his fingers close on hers as he still looks—so sweet—so strangely sweet a face, and yet—what is it?

"I am glad to meet you," says she, softly.

With an agitation he (not knowing) cannot account for, she tightens her fingers upon his. Then she stops her little faint attempt at welcome, as if asking him to help her out, to continue this first conversation. But Tom Brande, who never yet in all his life was without an answer to anyone, now finds himself hopelessly stranded, dumb, stupid.

What is it? Why does she look at him like that? Her eyes wide open do not seem to catch his——

A faint, *faint* touch of distress comes into the beautiful face.

"You must speak to me," says she, colouring in a little vague, delicate way. "You must let me hear your voice. It is by their voices that I learn to know my friends, because—" she hesitates, and the hesitation is inexpressibly sad—" because, I cannot see them!"

CHAPTER VII.

"The truest love that ever heart
Felt at its kindled core,
Did through each vein, in quickened start,
The tide of being pour."

YES. She is blind. This lovely thing, with the first breath of life upon her. It seems impossible to believe it at first—looking at her with those

large eyes open. Indeed, there is nothing to show it, save the little nervous action of the hands, and the clinging to the arm of those nearest to her. Though singularly beautiful, this first child of the squire's union with "his sweetheart"—and the one likest to her—and, therefore, dearest to him—is denied the joy of looking at the world as she goes by it.

A terrible fever when she was five years of age had left her strong and perfect in body, but bereft of sight. The large, soft brown eyes, with their heavily-fringed lids (that lie like silk upon the rounded cheek), as you look at them seem as though they looked at you, but they see neither you—nor the wall beyond—nor the heavens outside—nor the earth beneath—nor the gracious sweetness of the summer's day—nor the sad fallings of the night that wrap her as them, in a darkness that can be felt.

But the world's darkness rises and lifts, and light shows itself between its lids of dawn—but Vincent, with her eyes wide, sees the dawn—never.

But if her eyes sit ever in darkness, her soul sees nothing but light. It sits in the light always—and Heaven—darkened to her beautiful sightless orbs—comes down to her soul and dwells there.

A sudden hot flush darkens Tom Brande's brow as the truth comes home to him; a touch of confusion that annoys him until he remembers that she cannot see it.

But the remembrance gives him a far deeper pang. Oh! that she *could* see—and sneer and despise. And then comes another certain thought—that even if she could see she would never sneer or despise; she *could* not—with that face.

He has murmured something polite to her, and now happening to turn, his eyes light on his brother. Cedric's gaze is rapt, and given entirely to the girl. His spiritual face has lit up, and there is something in it that Tom has never seen there before. A delight! an awe! a longing!

Tom marvels at the new look, and ponders on it. Often he has seen his brother's face transfigured by tales of the wrongs, the miseries of the unhappy ones of the earth—those who come to birth only to crawl to death—and the eager desire to help, to succour the suffering, he has felt for many years has been born with his brother. Now that desire has arisen again, and is showing in his dark eyes, but intensified a thousandfold, and

linked with another look that is strange to Tom. He fails to grasp the meaning of it.

"This is Mr. Cedric Brande, darling," says Mrs. Egerton, with great tenderness.

"Yes?" says the girl, questioningly, laying her little white hand in Cedric's now, who too has taken it. He seems to understand the situation far better than Tom. Tom! who, as a rule, guides him through most conventional difficulties.

"I hope we shall be friends," says Cedric, in his low, intense way.

Vincent lifts her beautiful head and looks round her anxiously (if one can call it looking), until it is a mere chance—her eyes seem to fall on Tom Brande

"Is it your voice?" asks she.

"No, my brother's," says Tom.

At this moment the wonderful similarity between his voice and Cedric's becomes even clearer to him. It strikes him afresh—and not altogether pleasantly.

"My voice," says Cedric, in a low tone.

Tom, he hardly knows why, laughs.

"For the matter of that it might as well be mine," says he.

"Yes, yes. The tones are very much alike," says the blind girl, quickly. She sighs. "Too much alike for me to—know. Always I can tell—but now."

"I shall adopt a disguise," says Tom, again with that detestable touch of frivolity that has seemed to have seized upon him since first he saw her, and knew the sadness of her life.

As he finishes his miserable speech, he expects to see her turn her sad, beautiful face from his, but to his surprise it lights up into a charming smile.

"That was the first Mr. Brande who spoke to me now," says she, gaily. Her lips part, and the prettiest little laugh possible escapes from them. "I am right. Auntie?"

"Quite right, darling," says Mrs. Egerton, into whose eyes tears of gladness have come at seeing her so bright with these strangers: these two young men who, perhaps, may give her some amusement—if——. But then—the squire.

"How did you know?" asks Tom.

"Because you," she hesitates, and holds out her hand, and Tom takes it reverently, "you have a happy nature. You like to laugh," "He can be serious, too," says Cedric, who is devoted to his brother.

The blind girl holds out her other hand to him.

"And you," says she, pausing, and pressing his fingers slightly, as though getting inspiration from them, "you are always serious—and," thoughtfully, "good."

"Oh! I say," says Tom Brande; "I call that distinctly unfair. Am I then of no good?"

"Oh! I didn't mean that," says she, laughing and blushing divinely; then all at once a little cloud damps the beauty of her smile, "I wish you did not both speak *quite* so much alike," says she, plaintively.

Mrs. Egerton pinches her ear.

"Would you undo the laws of nature?" asks she; "and come, here is someone whose voice you already know, and who has no 'double'—Victor Mowbray."

Vincent greets him with her usual exquisite gentleness, but his coming does not seem to interest her; she looks preoccupied—thoughtful.

"Mr. Brande," says Mrs. Egerton, turning to Tom, "come and help me to get up a game. I am afraid we have not enough to fill two courts, but if *you* will play with Madge, and your brother——"

"Don't put me in, please," says Cedric, looking up from the seat he has taken beside Vincent; "there are plenty of others, and Miss Grace and I have just lit upon a happy subject."

Tom Brande casts a hurried glance at Vincent. She is sitting with her small hands folded in her lap, and with her lips smiling.

"Then you, Victor," says Mrs. Egerton, "you and Janie."

"I'm going to play a single with Batty," says that young lady, promptly. There is vengeance in her eye as it rests on Batty. Plainly she has made up her mind to give him an awful thrashing—now that she has got him to give her "thirty."

"Then I am afraid you must fall back upon me, Victor," says Mrs. Egerton, a little shamefacedly—though, indeed, she need not have been ashamed of anything, as she still looks as comely a woman as one need care to see, and is as good a tennis player as can be found anywhere in the neighbourhood.

(To be continued.)



The Plackbird in November.

Though the yellow acorns come dropping down,

What though the maple leaves are red, And the bright gold leaves are shed.

There are sun and blue sky,

And a world of bright weather,

Where you and I-

Oh, my sweet, together,

Together can sing

Of the greenwood ways,

And the beautiful budding, building days

Of spring.

What though the winter creeps on apace,
Laying grey veils on our green earth's face.
The bushes are heavy with berries sweet,
Sweet songs to sing—red berries to eat,
And life still rhymes to love and delight.
There are wide wet lawns that will still be green,
There be worms to pick when the sun shines bright.

(Pale wintry sun-

Like the ghost of the golden summer one !!)
There be boughs where two can sit of a night

With ruffled feather,

Close, close together.

And dream of the day

Not so far away

(And every day nearer), when we, my sweet.

With eager bills, and small clever feet,

Shall build our nest

In the May-tree's breast.

When the budding May is green and white,
And the ferns uncurl and the violets peer—
And the beautiful love-warm spring is here—
What shall we care for the cold and rain,
That have led us through winter-time back again
To spring?

E. NESBIT.



AUTHORS' COUNTIES.

II.—DEVONSHIRE: MR. BLACKMORE.

By REV. S. BARING GOULD.

I T was a fortunate accident that the appearance of "Lorna Doone" concurred with the marriage of the Princess Louise with the Marquis of Lorne; for the indiscriminating public at once jumped to the conclusion that the novel had something to do with the royal marriage, and eagerly demanded it at the libraries. But "Lorna Doone" had merits which at once established its position on firmer grounds than a misapprehension as to its purport, and has proved to be one of those few novels which has not only laid hold of, but has retained its hold on, the hearts of the English people.

It possessed a freshness in style, and an originality in delineation of character which were of the highest order, and it introduced the reading public to new pastures, and those pastures were very delightful ones.

The county of Devon, taken as a whole, is the most beautiful in England, except perhaps Westmoreland. It does not possess the limestone scars of the great western chain which forms so fine a feature in Yorkshire, but, on the other hand, it has none of the deadly dulness of flat Holderness. There is in Devon no plain whatever, it is a rolling country eleft with deep and beautiful valleys, and, on account of its being embraced by the ocean, has a mild climate that makes vegetation in it luxuriant. Moreover, it is full of contrasts. In the Apocalypse an angel is represented with one foot on sea, the other on land, and literally in Devon it is possible to stand with one foot in the wilderness of bleakness and primeval nature, the other in the trimness and luxuriance of culture. Dartmoor, Exmoor, and other smaller heathery expanses are as they left the hand of God; but nestling into their coombes.

sweeping about their flanks, are meadows dense with gold-cups and red robbins, park-like groups of noble trees, and in and out among the woods peep pleasant modern residences, wreathed with roses and clematis, or thatched old faims in hale and smiling age. The ancient name for Devon was Dyff-naint, or the Deep Valleys, and this is its characteristic. It is not a mountainous county. Its granite tors nowhere soar above two thousand feet, but it is cleft in every direction with valleys deep, umbrageous, and beautiful.

This is due to its geological structure. Granite, though the most primitive of the rocks, is not the most ancient. This sounds a paradox, but it is the statement of a fact. Granite is a broth of mixed constituents—feldspar, quartz, mica, schorl—and is the lowest known formation of the so-called earth's crust. At certain epochs it has heaved from below, and has heaved the superincumbent beds of rock that lie upon it, and has so fractured them as to render them liable to be carried away by water. Granite has never been protruded to the open day. It has consolidated under enormous pressure. Had that pressure been removed, granite would have transformed itself into something very unlike itself, into lays and basalt.

Now at some remote antiquity the sleeping granite, like the giant Loki, writhed and raised itself in its subterranean abode, and as it did so it uplifted the masses of carbonaceous schist that lay upon it, and so crumpled it and upset it in so doing, that in some of the diluvial rushes of water that passed over the land the superincumbent beds were washed clean away, and exposed the granite that had broken them up. Thus we have the great



THE DOONE VALLEY.

central mass of Dartmoor, and the western granite islets of the Bodmin and Luxulian, Penrhyn and Land's End, all granite moors and tors. Far away to the north the granite has poked its nose out at Lundy, but though it struggled hard to assert itself and breathe the air under Exmoor, the superincumbent beds sat upon it so hard, and with such tenacity, that they kept the granite down.

Now imagine a porpoise rising in the sea. What bells of water it forms over its huge, heaving mass, and how the sea around is churned and tossed into waves, and sucked into troughs. Precisely the same thing happened when the granite was rising. It treated the sedimentary rocks, crystallised through heat, much as the porpoise does the water it displaces. It broke it into waves, ripples, gullies; and waves, ripples, gullies, being of stone, have remained as they were when thrown up or depressed. Devonshire, accordingly, has been given its character through the efforts of granite to come to the top.

So much for the physical structure of the land. When the visitor has mastered the reason why Devon is Dyff-naint, the land of deep vales, he sees that it could not be otherwise than a region of ups and downs.

The population of Exmoor and of all the West of Devon is almost identical in composition with that of Cornwall, Wales, Ireland, and the Western Isles of Scotland. It is a broth made up of various materials, as is granite, and it is as like the broth that constitutes the population of the West Coast of the British Isles, as the granites resemble each other wherever they appear. The stolid Saxon element is conspicuous by its absence, There is noticeable an underlying dark, sallow, short-built stock, with, overlying it, another that is fair, clear complexioned, and tall. The dark race is the Siberian or Ivernian, the Ugric population which held Britain before the advent of the Celts. The fair race is more composite, for the British Isles were invaded by two waves of Celtic immigration. One is represented by the Gaels, the other by the Britons proper. After these came the Saxons, but although the Thanes were of German stock, the vast bulk of the people were of the Ivernian-Celtic mixture. Just a taste of Saxon and a smack of Norman blood were added, much as a flavour of garlic is given to certain dishes, and please because a soupçon-and a soupçon only.

The result is, that in the Devon people there is much of the peculiar merits, and, it must be added, demerits, of the same hodge-podge elsewhere in Western Britain. There is an inherent courtesy and grace of manner, infinitely charming, a ready hospitality, a willingness to please, and a warmth of heart, most engaging; but, on the other hand, there is a lack of energy, an imaginativeness that is indifferent to truth, and an impulsiveness that is inconsistent with a sound judgment. The Devonian peasant is shrewd, with a fund of dry humour, much unconscious poetry in his mind and speech, and he is an inveterate talker. Compared with a man of the East Coast, he resembles the son in the Gospel, who said, "I go and went not"; whereas the Saxon on the Eastern shore of the North Sea churlishly says, "I go not," but he does what has been set him notwithstanding.

Mais, que voulez-vous! Is it not this delightful happy-go-lucky, amiable, courteous, and quaint mixture that lends itself, above all other, to be used by the novelist? And are not the dislike for work and love for talk due, in large measure, to the soft relaxing atmosphere that enervates without debilitating? Certainly the West Countryman, when out of his native atmosphere, exhibits energy and persistency enough.

There is something more in the Devonian peasant that makes him a suitable subject for the novelist. There is unmistakably great personal beauty to be found among both the men and women.

I remember, many years ago, I had half-adozen masons and labourers engaged on some works outside my windows one summer. All our visitors were struck with the looks of the men. One tall, fair man, with brilliant complexion and grey eyes, went among our visitors by the sobriquet of Lohengrin; another, a tall man, dark, with splendidly cut features, was called "The Spanish Hidalgo." A third, of Greek mould and gracefulness, a young man, was "Prince Cheri." A fourth, an old man with flowing white beard and aquiline nose, was "The Patriarch," and an artist could have used him as a study for the Father of the Faithful.

But it is chiefly among the fair sex that Devonian beauty is proverbial. This is due primarily, no doubt, to the lovely complexions. Schnee-witchen had one of snow and blood. Her mother pricked



her finger in winter-time, and uttered a wish that she might have a daughter as fair as the snow and with cheeks and lips as the blood. Most Devon cate. The faces are long and not square, never flat.

The valley of the Doone is, thanks to Mr. Black-more's story, one of the most visited in England. Although the scenery is fine, and some ruins remain of the cottages that were occupied by the Doones, vet it is not quite what one might expect from the description given of it by the novelist; but then, the Slid is delineated, it must be remembered, by Jan Rid when a small boy, at an age when there is a tendency to exaggeration of difficulties, and to convert molehills into mountains, and to turn a dribble into a waterfall.

Although Exmoor itself has no boldness of outline, and the heights it attains rarely exceed 1,600 feet, yet from the fact that it rises out of the sea, on the north, it shows itself to the best effect. A good deal has been reclaimed during this century, but much waste land still remains run over by the Exmoor pony. It is destitute of the tors which give so much charm to the scenery of Dartmoor.

According to Dr. Beddoe, in his "Etymology of the British Isles," an unusually large settlement of the Silurian race occupies Exmoor, and the river name, Ore (Oare), which not only occurs there and gives its appellations to a parish, is found again at Loxore, and the word is of Ugric or Turanian origin, and signifies "water." In the time when Tacitus wrote, the speech of the Silurians was identical with that of the Basques.

To my mind-I shall be thought very wrong in my estimate-Blackmore's "Maid of Sker," is a finer story altogether than "Lorna Doone." In both he has used up local traditions. There is no doubt that, about the time of Cromwell's usurpation, a gang of freebooters occupied the Badgeworthy valley, and maintained itself there for a considerable time; it plundered the farmers in the neighbourhood, and waylaid and robbed travellers. At last, on account of an atrocious murder committed by them, the whole country-side rose, surrounded the gang, and captured them. They were brought to trial for their numerous crimes, and were executed. In like manner, and at the same period in the neighbourhood of Lydford, a wild and lawless set of men lived in the ravines, and around the volcanic cone of Brentor, under a leader called Roger Rowle. So also did Bamfylde Moore Carew, the king of beggars, as he was entitled, though of an old and honourable Devon family,

place himself at the head of a body of gypsies and other wild companions, and took possession of an island in the St. German's river, near Devonport, and held it for King Charles.

To return to "The Maid of Sker." In this story Mr. Blackmore has introduced the savages of North Devon, to whom Mr. Greenwood just drew public attention. Their real name was Cheriton, and they occupied some land and a cottage in the parish of Coleridge. These people were often actually in a condition of nakedness, and, like Adam, "were not ashamed." They laid hands on any objects of clothing incautiously exposed after a washing and not watched, and were not above taking from fields turnips and potatoes to feed their empty paunches, as the garments were appropriated to clothe their nakedness. On one occasion the curate of the parish mightily offended them by some well-meant interference with their objectionable habits, and at night, as he was riding through a dark lane, they laid a gate across it, in hopes thereby of throwing down his horse and possibly of breaking his neck. In the dusk he observed a figure in the hedge, and with a suspicion of mischief dismounted, and happily discovered the gate before his horse stepped between its bars. The man, who was in hiding, to watch results, leaped the hedge, and the curate could make out by his scanty clothing, that he was one

The family consisted of a patriarchal old man, a woman, and a number of younger members of the set whose relationship to each other was not distinctly made out.

An epidemic broke out among them, and Lady Portsmouth, who visited them in their sickness, and was most tender and kind to the poor wretches, succeeded in having them removed to a hospital. No sooner were the gang out of the place than the people of the neighbourhood tore the old cottage down. It was in a condition of ruin whilst the Cheritons occupied it, and the old woman slept with her head on the hearth, and a sack stuffed up the chimney, as this was the only portion of the dwelling that was rainproof. Pigs and the donkey wandered in and out at pleasure through the gaps in the "cob" walls.

The story of the stolen heir in "The Maid of Sker" is based on a real fact connected with an illustrious North Devon family. Moreover, Mr.



THE SNOWSTORM.



Blackmore worked into his story the character of a notorious pair of parsons in the same portion of the county. Parson Chowne actually was rector of Knowstone, and the tradition of his evil deeds is by no means faded out of recollection. The people tell still of the manner in which he revenged himself upon any farmer who offended him. He had two methods. One was to invite the man against whom he meditated evil to dine with him, when he would ply him with liquor, and when his guest drove away, down a steep and rugged hill, the linch-pin of one of his wheels would come out, and the man be thrown from his trap, and break neck, or leg, or arm. The other way was less severe. He would say before some man whom he could trust, "I wonder how bad Farmer X. would feel were his rick to be fired?" Next night the rick would be in flames. Chowne never entered into alliance with the Savages of Coleridge; nor did he end his days torn to pieces by dogs, as represented in the novel. Several of the tales told of him in "The Maid of Sker" are, however, true, as is that of his having introduced an apple-pip

The story is told of Parson Chowne that the Bishop of Exeter sent word that he would visit him. Chowne had a portion of the road dug up and filled with peat-water, and then covered over with sticks and furze and a sprinkling of soil. The bishop's carriage went in, and the bishop was upset; but Henry of Exeter was not the man to be stopped by such a matter as a break-down—not on the road, but of the road—and he walked forward on foot.

"Mr. Chowne," said he, "I've heard strange stories of von."

"Wall, my lord," answered the rector, "so hev I of you. But, my lord, us be gantlemen, you and I, and us pays no notice to the chitter-chatter of a pars'l o' fules."

Nothing could be brought home to Chowne. He was far too clever a man to allow himself to be caught in his malpractices. Towards the end of his days he resigned his living, and resided in a house of his own.

"Christowell" is a story of Mr. Blackmore's, with the scene laid on the eastern slopes of Dartmoor. Christowell is thought to be Christowe; and his description of the lanes leading to Dartmoor, of the carrier's cart going through them, over

the masses of rock, is true enough. He describes a famous thunderstorm that took place at Widdecombe, when the church, counted as the "Cathedral of the Moor," was struck by lightning. This took place on October 21st, 1638. The day was Sunday, and the Rev. George Lyde was performing evening service, when darkness set in, followed by an explosion of electricity, and the church was struck. Mrs. Lyde was scorched by lightning, but

her child, seated in the same pew, received no injury.

A woman who attempted to rush out was so miserably burnt that she expired the same night. Many other persons died from the same cause. One unhappy man had his skull fractured, and the brains removed and cast on the pavement. "The hair of his head," says the chronicler of the event, "stuck fast to the pillar near him." A beam from the roof was thrown down, and fell between the parson and his clerk; neither was



injured. A pinnacle of the tower in its fall broke through the roof and crushed a woman.

Throughout the whole of this time, the parson went on with the church service. At a moment of

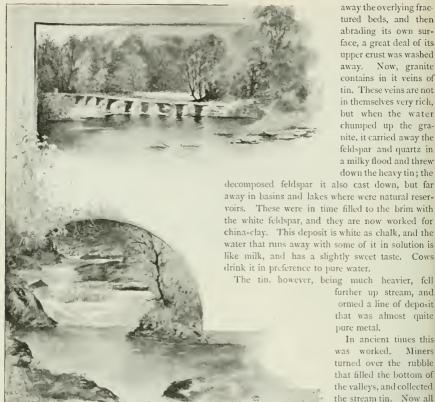
the utmost panic in the congregation he said, "Let us make an end of prayer, since it is better to die here than in another place."

In the tower of the

porary record in verse of this marvellous storm.

This tower is one of the noblest in South Devon. According to tradition it was erected by the miners as a free-will offering for their success in streaming or mining, and not one received





upper crust was washed away. Now, granite contains in it veins of tin. These veins are not in themselves very rich. but when the water chumped up the granite, it carried away the feldspar and quartz in a milky flood and threw down the heavy tin; the decomposed feldspar it also cast down, but far away in basins and lakes where were natural reservoirs. These were in time filled to the brim with the white feldspar, and they are now worked for

away the overlying fractured beds, and then abrading its own surface, a great deal of its

further up stream, and ormed a line of deposit that was almost quite

pure metal.

In ancient times this was worked. Miners turned over the rubble that filled the bottom of the valleys, and collected the stream tin. Now all this has been exhausted.

In pre-historic times, before the advent of the Romans, the stream tin was collected and sent away for the manufacture of bronze. In historic times the old refuse of the pre-historic workers was turned over and over again, and what the earlier miners had failed to collect was eagerly picked out. In or about Queen Elizabeth's reign, mining was carried on by driving adits into the rock, following the tin veins, and this is the method that has been pursued ever since.

On the refuse heaps of the miners grow magnificent sycamore trees of great age, and pines have been planted in modern times that revel and run riot in the rubble soil mixed with peat.

Perhaps at no time can the Vale of Widdecombe,

a penny in payment for his labour from the laying of the foundation to the setting up of the pinnacles.

Widdecombe lies in a valley between granite heights. On one side is the mighty ridge of Hameldon, that rears itself as a huge wave 1,605 feet, and on the other a series of bold tors, Bell-tor, Chinkwell, and Honeybag. The entire valley has been "streamed," that is to say, the stone and gravel covering its granite bottom have been turned over in quest of stream tin.

Stream tin is so called because it lies in long lines as if deposited by water, and is the richest as well as the easiest getatable to be found. At the vastly remote period when the granite was upheaved, and currents of water poured over its surface, sweeping and the side of the moor described in "Christowell," be seen to more advantage than at the end of September or the beginning of October. Then the rowan, or mountain ash, has shed its leaves, and is converted into a tree hung with coral beads, a faint haze veils the scene; the fern has begun to turn brown; the oak is golden copper; and the scarlet berries of the rowan are dense here—there—everywhere. It is a fairy scene—one is in the land of coral.

Another of Mr. Blackmore's novels is set partly in Devon; it is that of "Clara Vaughan," one of his earliest, if not his earliest work. It is not equal to his later novels, and yet contains in it scenes of great power. In this tale he has an account of a wrestling-or as it is locally called a wrastling match. Wrestling in Devon and Cornwall is a sport of the past, and many of the terms used in it are now unintelligible. But of old, it was the county game, and most villages had their "playfields," places were the young met to wrestle. An old tanner, now dead, told me how that, when he was a boy, every summer evening the youths were wont to assemble in the "play-field," which was strewn with bark, there to exercise themselves in wrestling matches. In addition there were grand matches at fairs, and a silver belt which was retained by the champion.

This silver belt was for many years held by a lusty fellow who lived at the lodge to my own grounds, but that was before I was born.

There was one throw which was a very dangerous one to give, it was called "Shewing the white mare," * and it consisted in flinging the opponent over the shoulder so that he fell on his back. The result was not unlikely to be a broken spine. That death ensued after some of these matches is constantly affirmed. I have given in "Songs of the West" a ballad relative to such a match, which I got from the old tanner above mentioned. The aged man told me that in his day, ladies and gentlemen made a point of going to the "play-field" to watch the wrestling just as now they attend cricket matches.

The ballad in question runs thus: -

" I sing of champions bold,
That wrestled, not for gold,
And all the cry was Will Trefry!
That he should win the day.

So Will Trefry, huzzah! The ladies clap their hands and cry, 'Trefry! Trefry! Huzzah!'

"Then up sprang little Jan, A lad, scarce grown a man, He said, 'Trefry, I wot, I'll try A hitch with thee this day,' So, little Jan, huzzah! The ladies clap their hands and cry, 'O little Jan, huzzah!'

"They wrestled on the ground,
His match Trefry had found,
And back he bore, in struggle sore.
He felt his force give way.
So, little Jan, huzzah!
This some did say—but others, Nay!
"Trefry! Trefry! Huzzah!"

"Then, with a desperate toss,
Will showed the flying hoss (horse),
And little Jan fell on the tan,
And never more he spake.
O little Jan! alack!
The ladies say, 'O woe's the day,
O little Jan! alack!'

"Now little Jan, I ween,
That day had married been;
Had he not died, a gentle bride
That day he home had led.
Then many a tear was shed,
The ladies sigh, the ladies cry,
hittle Jan is dead!"

Here and there in Mr. Blackmore's Devonshire stories comes out his innate, ineradicable love for apples. A Devonshire boy will break over a barbed wire fence for apples, and a Devonshire man break into a cellar through bolts and bars after cider. With a local legend relative to cider I will conclude.

Once upon a time the brewers of Exeter found it impossible to make a living with ale, so strong was the craving for cider. So they made a compact with the Evil One, that he should send a frost to cut the apple blossoms in May, in consideration for which favour they undertook to adulterate their beer. Now there falls a frost very frequently on the 19th, 20th, and 21st of May, and this is termed St. Frankom-mass.

St. Frankom is an euphemism for the unmentionable. Now whensoever such a frost comes and cuts the apple blossoms, then, for "sure-cartain," say the Devonians, "Them there rascals o' brewers ha' been at it agin wi' 'dulteration o' their October ale. St. Frankom he's kep' his word—not for nothin'. He may be black, but he's a gantlemon."

^{*} Mr. Blackmore calls it "Abraham Cann's stay-lace."

NEITHER LAUREL NOR BAY.

By Christian Burke.

I.

A N old-fashioned Rectory garden, with sunny lawn not too well kept for the daisies to spangle it with their dainty stars. Wide stretches of flower-border filled with all the blossoming plants that will grow out of doors in an English June. In the centre of the lawn a far-spreading mulberry tree, and underneath it a group of boys and girls, beguiling the long hour of the hot summer afternoon before the welcome sound of the tea-bell should summons them within, by "telling fortunes."

"When I grow up," said blue-eyed Maisie, reflectively rolling two somewhat dusty hands in her white apron, "when I grow up of course I shall marry. Some one very rich—perhaps a Duke, but at least a 'Sir' somebody, and we'll have a splendid country estate and a house in town, and lots of servants to wait on us. And I'll have the most lovely dresses, and never wear anything shabby; and we'll go everywhere and see everything; and I'll never do a stitch of needlework—not so much as sew on a button—and as for socks, I'll never touch a darning-needle again!"

This speech was concluded by a vigorous kick at the mighty stocking-basket at her feet, resulting in an upset and a rapid descent of balls of wool and rolled-up socks towards the little stream at the foot of the lawn, and an immediate dispersal of the company to pick them up again.

"Now, Janet, it's your turn," said one of the lads, order being restored, while he dexterously proceeded to thread a pair of scissors on to Maisie's long fair hair, and to knot them securely while his unconscious victim sought for them anxiously in every corner of her basket.

The girl thus addressed lifted up an eager, hawkeyed face from the book on her knee. "It's so silly to be married," she said, energetically; "It's all girls think about, pretty ones like Maisie at least. Well, I am glad I'm not the family beauty!"

There was a burst of laughter at this. "No fear of your ever being mistaken for that," said Leslie, with brotherly candour. "If Maisie's face is her fortune, yours certainly isn't. Yes, t really

is odd what can have become of those scissors! I fancy that beggar Steve's got them, May, but here, Janet, do hurry along, or we shan't each get a turn. You've only told us what you won't be, you know."

"I shall go to college," said the girl, decisively; "I shall go to Girton and get my degree, and be bracketed Senior Wrangler."

"Aren't you that now?" queried long-limbed Hugh, with an air of laudable inquiry, but Janet refused to "rise"!

"And what will you do after that?" asked Stephen, "Maisie will have her grand house and her duke to look after, but you can't stop at Girton for ever."

"Perhaps I might. I might be the head of it. I don't know, though, whether that would quite suit me. I think I shall write books and make a lot of money, and I shall give lectures to the poor on Culture and Education. Perhaps I shall endow a college for girls with great ambitions and no means to realise them. I shall find plenty to do, I'm sure, and I'll have a big library and read every book that ever was written!"

"What a tame set girls are!" struck in Hugh.
"Fine clothes and books! That's not my'sort. I mean to see the world; I shall be a sailor or an explorer. I intend to go where no one else has ever been, and see all the 'uttermost parts of the earth.' That's what I call life. I'll make a name that shall knock Stanley and Livingstone into a cocked hat! Heigh-ho! what a beastly time it does take to grow up!"

"Soldiering for me," said Leslie. "I don't know that I care so much about a big name, there's lots of heroes in the ranks, you know. But I should like to do something grand and brave enough to deserve a V.C. Anyway, a man can serve his Queen and his country, and that's glory enough. But oh! I do hope that when my time comes I may be able to die in battle."

The boy's eyes flashed as he spoke, and he seemed to hear the noise of the cannon and the rush of horse, the clank and clamour of men, and the shouts of triumph as they harried the sullen retreat of the foe.

"I don't see how everyone is to get to the top of everything," said Dolly, plaintively, fanning herself and Stephen with a big straw hat. "You're all so grand, and want to be such swells, and I expect we shall all end by being nobodies."

"What a dreadful little wet blanket you are," cried Maisie; "where's the use of building castles if we don't make them big ones!".

"And suppose, instead of crushing us with the words of wisdom, you told us what you intend to be," said Stephen, with a benevolent twitch at the short brown curls, for, as everyone knew, Dolly was his favourite sister.

"Well, you'll all laugh I know, but you see I'm not clever and ambitious like the rest of you. Now I should like to be a working woman, and live in a cottage or a little farm, and have a dairy, and keep pigs and milk the cows, and make butter—the very best butter—and have lots of flowers, and help the poor people. I don't think I should mind what I did so that I could be right in the country, and have what Steve calls 'all out-of-doors' to live in, and I think I should like a dog of my own better than anything else in the world!"

"Hear! hear! I think Dolly's the most likely of us all to get her wish. She hath the blessed gift of moderation," said Stephen, "and on mature reflection, I think I'll keep my future plans to myself, and then if they don't come true, you will none of you be able to laugh at me!"

He was the eldest of the group, nearly sixteen, with a keen, earnest face, very different from impetuous Leslie and fun-loving Hugh. A strong reliable nature that made both father and mother speak of their eldest son with a touch of irrepressible pride. And in their unselfish schemes for their children's future, it was always of Stephen they thought as the one who would serve best his day and generation, and be the joy of their failing age.

"Yes, I shall keep my affairs to myself, and if I wasn't so 'parched' with thirst, as Dolly used to say, I'd go down to the village for the London paper. I declare tea's later than ever to-day."

He made a feint as if to get up from the grass, but was promptly pinioned by Hugh. "No! no! that's not fair!" they all exclaimed, "we've told you all about our castles, and you must tell us yours. And the truth, mind," said Janet, with a menacing frown, as she laboriously tried with

somewhat clumsy fingers, to disentangle the scissorsfrom Maisie's locks, that young lady having at last discovered their whereabouts.

"Yes, Steenie, you must—Janet, you need not pull the hair out of my head—else we shall think you've grown too grand for us since you went to Charter House!"

"I know what Steve's castle is—at least it isn't a castle, it's a hospital," said Hugh. "Yes, he's going to be a doctor and cut off legs and arms, and make up vile smelling medicines, and live among fevers and typhoids, and disgusting things of that sort," and he spread out his hands in horror at the reflection.

"You shut up, and let him tell his own story," said Leslie; "though I can't make out why you should go in for that sort of thing, old fellow, when you might have such a splendid career in the army!"

"Why, it is a splendid career!" retorted his brother. "You talk of cutting off legs and arms, Hugh, but I think that will be more in Leslie's line. I don't mean to say anything against soldiers, but I think there's quite as much heroism on sick-beds as on the field of battle. And when you come to professions, it seems to me that a man cannot find a nobler one than the saving of life—and to have the skill and knowledge to be able to lessen sorrow and suffering, surely is one of the grandest things in the world. Just think what it would be to find out something that might cure the pain of perhaps thousands of people. Oh, there is so much one might do!"

There was silence among the little group, for Stephen's words had struck a more serious cord. Instinctively they felt that his ambition was something different, something higher than theirs. The thought of self seemed hardly to have entered his calculations, save as his life might be made of use to others.

"Well," said Leslie, at last, "we've sketched ourselves out some handsome fortunes, name and fame, and money. I wonder what will come of it all, and what will prove true. Stephen will get his wish, I prophecy, because he only wants to be let to work for other people, and this isn't the sort of world to hinder that kind of ambition. I say, suppose we all meet fifteen years hence, and compare notes of all we've done, and all we've not done during that time."

There was great applause at this suggestion, until Hugh's unfortunately logical mind compelled him to remark that fifteen years hence, if all went as they hoped, they might be scattered to the four quarters of the globe. They looked rather grave over this. It was all very well to think and plan, but after all home was home, and it wasn't altogether a pleasant reflection that growing up and starting in life meant partings and sunderings of time and space.

"I'll tell you what we can do," said Stephen, "we'll write. Wherever we are we can do that. And as to-day is Janet's birthday we'll make her umpire. In her 'learned leisure' she's more likely to have time to read letters than the rest of us. She can edit the correspondence, and circulate it for our mutual edification."

"Oh, what a capital plan! Now mind, that's a bargain," they cried, and Janet accepted the responsible post with blushing dignity.

They were all strong and full of hope, and they had no misgivings. Their talk had been somewhat graver than usual, but they put the matter lightly aside as the cheerful sound of the gong broke upon the stillness.

"There it is at last, thank goodness!" said Leslie, tumbling to his feet, "and I do hope that Susan won't have forgotten the apricot jam for tea."

II.

"LESLIE, old fellow, don't take on so—you'll break my heart." A thin white hand was laid caressingly on the curly head which was buried among the pillows, while the boy's broad shoulders shook with suppressed sobs that all the pride of seventeen years was unable to restrain.

Stephen Thorpe lay back, waiting patiently till the paroxysm should be passed. The two years that had sped had wrought grave changes here. The frank clear eyes were still full of light, and the smile when it came had its old rare sweetness, but pain and disease had set their mark on the drawn thin face and wasted form, and those who saw him now could hardly realise that this was the boy who such a short while before was in all the bloom of his growing manhood. A fall while on a mountain holiday had resulted in terrible spinal mischief, for which there was no cure, and now

the end was very near. But though the body might be shattered and broken, sickness had had no power over the brave spirit which seemed to grow stronger and braver with every step it took towards the dark valley.

Leslie had always been devoted to his brother, and now his heart was wrung with intolerable anguish, for the latter had at last put into words the truth only too sadly known to them both, that they had but a few more days to be together. After a few moments he regained his self-control, and lifting his head while his rough brown hand stroked the thin fingers as tenderly as a woman, he said, "It's over now, and I'm a brute to let you see it; but oh, Steve! it's so terribly hard to let you go; there seems nothing left to live for when you are gone!"

"Hush, Leslie, don't say that. Think of the others—my poor father—I'm afraid he'll miss me, but just now it is my greatest comfort to know that he has a son—such a son as you will be—to comfort him."

"But it does seem so hard—so awfully hard," went on the poor boy, with a break in his voice; "You are so young to die, and you were so well and strong; there are so many useless and feeble whom no one would miss, and you would have done such good work in the world. I suppose I am very wicked, but it seems to me so horribly unjust that you should be called upon to go, with all your hopes unrealised—"

A quiver passed over his brother's face, and then he said with a brave cheerfulness that was yet quite unfeigned.

"Well, perhaps I've done my work already, though there isn't much for any one to see, and as for hopes, I don't mean to pretend it has not been a hard struggle to let them go, but I have done it at last. Who knows, there may be some better work waiting for me on the other side, for I cannot think of that 'fuller life' as one of idleness. Any way, Leslie, these few months have taught me that though it is a glorious thing to be allowed to do God's work, yet He counts it service also if we learn to bear His Will."

There was silence for awhile, the evening sunlight streamed in through the open window and flooded all the room with rose and amber light, the first stars glimmered faintly through the blue, and the scent of the garden roses stole softly

on the still air; after a time Stephen murmured dreamily—

"'I am content to do it—yea, Thy Law is within my heart.' It has been a hard lesson to learn, but I think it's done now. I'm very tired, Leslie, and I'm not sorry to know that it won't be long before I get my Exeat!"

He was exhausted with the effort of speaking, and fell quietly asleep holding his brother's hand. He only lived for a few days after that and when he died no one perhaps but Leslie ever knew what a battle had been fought and won on that sick-bed. Not much to show for it, as he said, but the deepening of character in the younger brother, the slow yet sure refining of will and purpose, were in years to come eloquent if silent witnesses that Stephen Thorpe had not lived his life in vain.

III.

"FIFTEEN years! Such a long while to look forward to, and yet how short as one looks backwards!"

So thought Janet Thorpe, as she leaned somewhat wearily in her chair, rocking softly to and fro, while the busy fingers, for the moment idle, absently played with the packet of letters lying in her lap.

It was a very different scene to the old rectory garden-this tiny sky parlour in a large metropolitan hospital. The sun, streaming in hot and fierce through the blindless windows, seemed to throw into stronger relief the plain bare surroundings, and the woman who sat there in her nurse's uniform, seemed to herself centuries removed from the eager book-loving dreamer of a decade and a half ago. Yet to others she was, perhaps, not so much changed as developed. The face was as keen and alert as of old, but the hawk-eye's look was softened by contact with trouble and expe-She had been too sharp-featured to be pretty as a girl, but she had rounded into a noblelooking woman, whose quiet, strong presence seemed to bring help and comfort wherever she went. She was a great favourite with her patients, and the roughest man and the fretfullest baby were alike amenable to "Sister Janet."

She was "off duty" this afternoon, and enjoying to the full the rare privilege, in that ceaselessly busy life, of an idle hour.

A little time to rest—a great bowl of roses, gathered when the sap was up in the early morning, and but just arrived from their far-off country home, the tiny afternoon tea-service, the sheaf of letters, and the bright sunshine—Janet looked round and decided she was having a very nice birthday indeed! Life is full of simple pleasures to those who are not too proud to enjoy them, and Janet Thorpe was one of these.

Still a whole hour before she would be wanted: and as she poured out her tea she read her letters once more and fell a-dreaming over their contents. Brothers and sisters alike had kept their promise, and had written to her on her thirtieth birthday the story that the years had brought them. Not one of them had realised their childish fortunes, so they said. Maisie had married early-not a duke by any means, nor even one of "the landed gentry," but a struggling curate, now a struggling vicar, in a large manufacturing town. They had a young family growing up round them, and often it required all her skill to make the proverbial two ends meet in anything like a satisfactory manner. Yet she was happy, for she had found that marriage had more beautiful things to give than ease and money. "I can't afford a new dress this summer," she wrote; "and there's simply no end to the darning; but the children are all well and bonny, and Philip is looking so much stronger that I am quite happy, and would not change my lot with the Queen !"

It was Dolly after all who had made the grander match. She had married a soldier whose name was destined to a more than European fame. She was the great lady of the family, and in her far-off Indian home had a somewhat onerous and difficult position to fulfil.

"I have just come back from a ball," she told her sister, "and I am so thankful to be out of my grand dress and able to sit down comfortably and write to you. You can hardly fancy your little Dolly among all this splendour, can you? and, indeed, I can hardly fancy it myself. I can tell you, Janet, though I have never breathed a word of it to any one else, but when my little Harold and Una died I was nearly mad with grief and discontent. I used to long so for that little farm-house I always meant to have, and to envy those English mothers whose little ones could grow up in the dear old green meadows at home and the fresh, pure air,

instead of withering away in this ghastly climate. But God was good, and sent another baby to comfort me, and Lawrence has promised that the moment he is old enough we shall bring him home to England. He is so tender with me, my dear, brave husband. He seemed to me so grave and old at first, but we have learnt to understand each other now, and I am so proud of him I would not change my lot with any one in the world."

Janet lingered long over this letter, for Dolly as the youngest of the family was very dear to her. Then she took up Hugh's epistle, and smiled as she read. It was not dated from the Antipodes, as might have been expected. He had given up his dreams of sailoring bravely when the failing family fortunes had made it advisable that one son at least should embrace a capital business opening, "I believe I shall have a kind of hunger for the sea till I die," he wrote, "but after all, Jenny, I am doing well, and have a good chance of being junior partner next year. And you know if I had not come to Liverpool I should never have met Hilda, and I'm sure when you see her you'll agree she's the best and prettiest girl in the world!"

She smiled again over the young lover's raptures, and then she fell to thinking of her own life. How Stephen's death had seemed to age at once both father and mother, and her sisters' early marriages had made her more and more necessary at home. How bit by bit her hopes had had to be given up, and home duties had thrust aside the ambitions that were so dear to her. What a hard struggle it had been, and how thankful she felt now that she had learnt to face her life cheerfully, and be content to make sunshine for those at home before the end came, and the old ties were snapped by the hand of death, and the old home was broken up for ever!

One more letter, and as she counted them over she sighed—for of that little group of dreamers one had long since passed into the silent land from whence there can come no message back.

"The very best of us all," she said to herself, echoing her brother Leslie's words. Leslie's letter was full of Stephen. "I cannot get him out of my mind to-day," he wrote from his east end curacy, for he had felt the whole current of his life change with his brother's death, and had taken

up another soldiership where hard work and an unknown place in the ranks, and liberty to spend and be spent for the good of others are the rewards held out to those who would enlist in that great army.

"What a life his would have been," he went on. "I sometimes think that the physician comes nearer to the hearts and souls of men than we of the priesthood can. What great things we hoped of him, and how he would have sympathised with you and me too in our work, . . . I don't think, Janet, I shall ever marry; there was a time when perhaps I wished it, but now my work fills all my life. It is difficult enough, and at times one grows sadly disheartened, one does but seem to touch the fringe of it all; still I am happy in it, and I would not change. . . . So much for our old ambitions! It seems to me that of us all it is Stephen who truly realised his desire, though it came in such an unknown aspect that we could not recognise it. He had no thought of self, you remember, and only wanted time to do the work to which he felt himself called. Surely all that splendid talent has somewhere had a fulfilment? I wonder if it has ever occurred to you how strangely applicable to him are the Psalmist's words-

"' He asked life of Thee and Thou gavest him a long life, even for ever and ever,"

"After all," she thought, as she walked down the long corridor for a fresh encounter with disease and perhaps with death, "after all I don't know that we need complain of our fortunes, we are all in 'honourable service,' though we're none of us likely to be the remarkable people we were so ready to fancy ourselves!"

An hour or two later and the "accident" was comfortably settled in bed, Nellie Threadgold was quiet again and Nurse Ruth had got the worried look out of her eyes, now that "sister" was at hand. Janet Thorpe as she moved about the ward setting things straight, smoothing hot pillows and tumbled beds, found her thoughts rhyming themselves to a quaint old measure of saintl George Herbert.

"How know I, if Thou shouldst me raise,
That I should then raise Thee?
Perhaps great places and Thy praise
Do not so well agree!"

MUSINGS IN AN OLD OLD GARDEN.

BY THE VERY REV. H. DONALD M. SPENCE, D.D., Dean of Gloucester.

M Y garden, under the shadow of the mighty cathedral tower, is a rare place to call up memories of a storied past. It is a very fair corner of the West of England, but its exceeding beauty does not come from its flowers or its trees. It has its flowers, but they are but commonplace every-day flowers. Bits of stone dropping from the lofty crumbling minster church and the old monastic buildings clustering round it make but a poor soil for grass and tree. We have to watch anxiously each grass plot, every flower-bed and tree, for everything would soon wither on the rocky stone bed. But if the turf be less green and the flowers less brilliant than in the many bright gardens which lie in and round the ancient historic city where I live, no one has such a garden-wall as I have, no one such a fair-carved screen to the south and east, for all round me rises a grey-white time-stained wall, built by skilful, loving hands when Edward III. was king in England. The wall is partly glass, partly stone, worked over with curious delicate tracery, broken up into graceful pointed arches, into clever devices for book-closets and little study chambers, into wells and lavatories: into nooks and corners where men prayed and read, pondered and dreamed-men forgotten now for nigh five hundred years.

Just above the carved arched wall on the south and east rises as a screen the mighty pile of one of the noblest of our English cathedrals, an almost perfect example of a great Norman abbey of the last quarter of the eleventh century, with its roundheaded Romanesque windows here and there curiously enriched with cunning Gothic tracery and ornaments as the centuries advanced-all crowned with a vast and lordly tower, the tower seemingly covered with stone lace-work and surmounted with soaring delicately-carved pinnacles; the great building a very confusion of rich and varied styles, all coloured, too-both the Norman work of the Conqueror and Rufus, and the Gothic ornament and tracery of the Plantagenet times-with that strange inimitable colouring which only time can paint upon these grey-white walls. Many a winter storm, many a hot and cloudless summer day has touched and retouched the delicate tracery of

the wondrous pile with soft pale grey hues; while green-blue lichens and delicate mosses half veil, half reveal the exquisite fancies of long-dead monk-artists, whose skilful loving hands carved tracery and pinnacle in the days of the Red King or Cœur-de-Lion; of men who added or changed, spoiled or improved their predecessors' work under the very eyes of hapless kings such as Edward II. or Richard II., who both loved this abbey well and spent many a day in the old buildings, which still throw their shadows into the old garden.

It has been a garden, a pleasaunce, a paradise—to use the old words—for more than eight hundred years. For eight centuries have men walked in it, mused in it, written in it. Not a little of the history of England has been acted in the little green enclosure and in the buildings round it. It was first laid out by Serlo, a pious, learned monk from the holy house of "St. Michael of the Perils of the Sea," in Normandy. Serlo was a chaplain of William, Duke of the Normans, whom we in England have come to call the Conqueror; Serlo was the friend of Lanfranc the Archbishop, King William's trusted friend and adviser.

For eight hundred years the great pile of the mighty church of St. Peter, grey and red coloured on its north side, has been the huge screen which shades the garden only too completely from the pale rays of an English winter sun. Many have asked the question, why did the Norman builders of the great Benedictine house of Gloucester place their fair garden on the north instead of on the south of the great abbey church? It seems to have been a strange mistake, and probably happened in this wise.

Serlo, the first Norman abbot, William the Conqueror's chaplain, who built the nave of the great church, and laid out and arranged the little garden of the cloisters, was the friend, probably the pupil, of Lanfranc of Pavia, the great archbishop. Skilful gardeners from North Italy were evidently employed in the monastic pleasaunces designed for the great buildings erected under the influence of the Italian Lanfranc. These men,

accustomed in their native land to regard the sun rather as a tyrant than as a friend, often laid out their fair gardens on the north side of the tall monastic buildings, so that the great church might throw a protecting shadow over the little square of

turf with its well of sparkling water and bright flowers -so at Canterbury, and here at Gloucester, the Cloister garth lies on the north of the minster church-alas! the Italian gardener knew little of the habits of our English sun, and he had scant experience of his rare faint rays. In the dreary months of an English winter, that mighty wall of Gloucester Cathedral shades our garden only too effectually from the scanty light and heat of the pale northern sun.

In this still peaceful little "paradise"

Norman William must have often paced, as he took counsel with one or other of his faithful barons, how best Saxon England was to be moulded and fashioned after his Norman pattern. We have an everpresent reminder of the Conqueror, for, on the east

side the windows, round-headed, chevron-adorned, of the vast chapter-house, look on the little walks and grassy lawn. It was in that chapter-house that the King-Duke held "deep speech" with his Witan-his council of the wise of Normandy and

Englandthe "deep speech" which resulted in the framing of the famous Domesday Survey. The first sketch of Domesday Book was written there. Again and again the Red King-the second William -sat wearing his crowned belm in that same famous chapter-room - little changed after eight hundred years, save in its eastern end, which was somewhat remodelled when Henry IV. was king. The Red King held many an anxious counsel rhere dur-C.H.Channer ing his strong reign. Many

that clever, wicked king have paced up and down our garden walks before Tyrrell's arrow pierced his breast in the New Forest's glades.

a time must

Inside the abbey church on which we are looking Fulcher, Abbot of Shrewsbury, preached his famous sermon, in which the death of the Red King was foretold in such plain terms—the very manner of the death was detailed—that Abbot Serlo, who seems to have held King William Rufus in some regard, sent off, without an hour's delay, special messengers to the king then hunting in the New Forest, to warn him of his imminent danger. But the doomed man paid no heed to the warning of Serlo—and we know how swiftly the doom overtook him, just as the Shrewsbury monk had foretold in his strange sermon preached in the nave of Gloucester Abbey. Here too, Beauclerc and his Empress daughter often came. The shades of the great Normans seem to haunt our little pleasaunce.

sojourned, on that solemn morning when he laid his royal ring upon the altar.

What a scene of gorgeous pomp must our little pleasaunce have been when the preparations were complete for the coronation of King Henry III. in the great Church!—king, and noble, and prelate, man-at-arms, worthy citizens and traders, how they must have thronged the little walks! What would we not give for a moment to re-people our "paradise" with the brilliant figures which must have filled it that morning when the king of England received his crown in the neighbouring Abbey! It is no hard task for the dreamer of the nineteenth century to people the little garden and the dim



MONKS' LAVATORY FROM THE GARDEN.

King Stephen was no stranger here; the Monks' chronicle tells us how—the day before a great crowd of citizens came to swear allegiance to the royal adventurer who claimed the fair inheritance of Maud somewhile Empress, the daughter of the dead Beauclerc—this Stephen laid his royal ring as a gift upon the high altar of the Abbey.

Our quiet garden must oftentimes have been Stephen's haunt, and the Monastery must have been his home whenever his party prevailed in Gloucester and the West. He would have passed through it from the Abbot's lodgings where he cloister-walks with dark-robed Benedictine monks. It is not so easy, though, to imagine the figures of the courtiers, with their strange many-hued bravery, or the stately mail-clad baron, who with the crowd of foreign soldiers, statesmen and churchmen made up the splendid court of Henry III.

The Abbey owes a vast debt to Henry III.'s grandson, the ill-fated Edward II. Men say Edward loved well Gloucester and its stately House of God. In a small quarto volume in the Library of Queen's College, Oxford, written in a hand of the fifteenth century, containing the "Historia

Monasterii Gloucestriæ," from its foundation to the early years of King Richard II., occurs the following striking story:—It happened one day that the king, Edward II., was feasting in the Abbot's lodging. The walls of the great churchman's refectory were adorned with portraits of kings and princes of

the royal Plantagenet House. Some think that theseportraits were painted on the plaster, somewhat after the fashion of what we see now on the west wall of the Temple -Church in London: others that these royal pictures were cunningly worked in tapestry-work -work for which our island was famed even in the Confessor's days, or earlier.

The king was looking at these pictures of renowned chiefs of his royal house, painted or worked on the walls of his friend the

Abbot's dining-hall, and he turned to his host and said to him. half wistfully, half playfully, "Lord Abbot, I wonder if you will ever add my picture to the gallery of my ancestors' portraits."

The Abbot-so runs the stery in the old

Chronicle—paused for a minute before replying to the king. His answer was very remarkable. Was it a prophecy? Was he permitted for a minute to look forward down the dark blood-stained future which lay before his kingly guest?

"Yes"-so runs the "Chronicle of the Monas-

tery" - the Abbot plied, "we hope here to have your likeness with us in our holy house, but when we have it we will give it a more honourable resting-place than the walls of my dining hall." Was it

a prophecy? Not many years after the Abbet made his strange answer to the king, that white alabaster effigy of the murdered Edward II., with its sad, beautiful face we know so well, was reverently laid by the dead king's son on Ed ward's grave, beneath the splendid sculptured canot y hard by



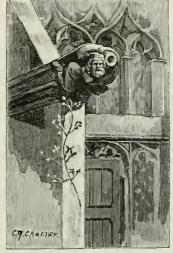
the high altar of that stately church. Experts tell us how that sad, fair face was evidently moulded on a mask taken after the king's death.

Five centuries and a half have come and gone since Edward was laid to sleep in his splendid

tomb in the great church, and the white portrait of the king has been left undisturbed in its sacred resting-place. We have it with us still. In good

truth, as Abbot Thoky said, the Abbey would indeed possess a portrait of the king, but it would surely find a more honourable resting-place than the wall of the refectory of the Abbot.

In the reign of King Richard II., A.D. 1378, the famous Parliament of Gloucester was held. It sat for seven or eight weeks. The Commons sat in the Chapter Room, the Lords-the "magnates" - held their sittings, apparently in private, in what the "Historia Monasterii" calls the guest chamber or the king's chamber. The noble hall in the prior's lodging, which at the time of the Reformation was divided into the draw-



DOOR OF MONKS' BOOK-CLOSET.

little quiet garden, which the "Chronicle" styles the "Viridum claustri," became a favourite resort for the nobles and courtiers. They were in the

habit of playing various games in it. Every vestige of the grass was trodden down, says the contemporary record, before the Parliament was concluded. This is one of the many curious memories connected with our pleasaunce.

That graceful, massive tower, with all its wealth of delicate tracery, with its wondrous colouring of pale silvery grey-the colour which four centuries of storm and sunshine alone can paint-which rises up from one corner of our garden, was being finished just as the long desolating Wars of the Roses were coming to an end.

Oueen Margaret must have looked on the scaf-

ing-room and dining-room of the present deanery, folding of the huge tower in the last hurried march of her ill-fated army by Gloucester to the fatal field of Tewkesbury. Four hundred vears and more have passed since the last stone was placed on the great Abbev tower at the corner of our garden.

> This central tower finished* the

EFFIGY OF ABBOT SERLO, THE CONQUEROR'S CHAPLAIN.

to have been the scene of this privy council. King Richard II. lived at Gloucester, with o ccasion al visits to Tewkesbury, while the Parliament held their sittings.

some suppose

So great was the influx of visitors

connected with the Court and Parliament, that the Monks' buildings, vast though they were, were overcrowded. The great religious house seemed more like a fair than a holy monastery, and our

* The Lady Chapel at Gloucester was somewhat later (about thirty years) in its present form, but was a kind of "after-thought." Beautiful and striking though it be, it can scarcely be said to belong to the Norman conception of St. Peter's Abbey.

Church of Serlo, the Conqueror's chaplain. For more than four hundred years had the monk-architect been busy in planning, altering, enriching the wondrous pile. The "Romanesque" builder was succeeded by the "Early English" artist, who, in his turn, gave place to the monk designer, who loved the more elaborate tracery and ornamentation we call "Decorated." These both worked their will on the Norman Abbey, and, in time, gave place to the bolder men who lit up the dark Norman choir with that pale silvery wall of jewelled glass at the Eastern end-who hung over the Norman columns and arches that delicate lace-work in stone which changed Serlo's gloomy east end into the faëry choir we now wonder at and admire with an evergrowing admiration.

And as we sit in the old garden, marvelling at the perfect beauty of the Abbey, with its strange fantastic ornaments-towers, turrets, battlements, gargoyles, doors, windows, with their cunning ornaments and varied tracery; with their stonework-white, grey, red, black-ornaments, differing one from the other in taste, in age, in thought, yet grouping together, strange to say, with an almost perfect beauty. As we sit and contemplate we remember that though all this loving work of building and adorning went on for eenturies, yet that some four hundred years have passed since all that work was finished; that for more than four hundred years nothing more has been attempted, no new thing of beauty or of grace has been added to the Church of Serlo, save the weird loveliness of the colouring which the wind and storm of many winters, driving up the broad vale of Severn, has painted on the slowly crumbling stones.

Why this long pause—a pause stretching over several hundred years? Why this sudden stop in the skilful, loving work? Have the cunning artists in stone and marble died out from among us? Has the spirit which quickened the brain and gave life and power to the busy fingers left for ever the homes and workshops of our race? I spoke of the long pause of four eventful centuries in the Abbey work of Gloucester, but Gloucester is not alone. As in Gloucester, so in Durham and York, in Westminster and Salisbury, and in every other city where a great minster church has arisen. Nor is this pause in religious architecture only noticeable in England. It is the same in France, in the Low

Countries, in Germany.* Few decorative ornaments have been added, few quaint, graceful changes have been attempted in these stately piles, nor, with rare exceptions, has there been any notable addition to these mighty homes of prayer and praise for the last four hundred years.

But this sudden pause in all attempts to devise new forms of beauty and grace in sacred architecture is not owing to any decline in religious fervour, to any fading away of faith in, and in love for, the Divine Author of our religion. The four centuries of slumber in sacred architecture contain no story of religious apathy. We must seek for other reasons which may account for this strange slumber of architectural power.

As we sit in the old cloister-walled garden of Gloucester, the question presses us home. Now, something happened in the fifteenth century which curiously affected the story of the western nations.

It was the Invention of Printing.—The Abbey and the Cathedral—roughly from the year of grace, 1050, not to go farther back than the last half of the eleventh century—had been the great, the model teaching book of the Church of Christ among the strong northern peoples of England, France, and Germany.

These vast and splendid creations of human thought served as models more or less to be imitated in a thousand lesser houses of prayer which acted as the smaller manuals of teaching. The number of these superb abbeys and cathedrals was very great. Every portion of each glorious church taught its lesson, told its story to the people. The lofty towers of Canterbury or of Gloucester, the soaring steeples of Salisbury and Chichester, the nave, the cross arms of the transepts, the triple aisle, the dim mysterious crypt, the sacred presbytery, the lofty and gorgeous altar ablaze with its lights, the rose or wheel window, the sculptured

* The almost solitary exception of the superb cathedral of Cologne, with its scrupulous reproduction of the old models, with all the long-sustained efforts to complete the work—begun so long ago—adds weight to the argument. St. Paul's, in Londou, was built under the pressure of a great national disaster. The beautiful unfinished Cathedral of Truro is the result of the splendid enthusiasm of Archbishop Benson, somewhile Bishop of the Cornish See. It is hard to find other exceptions. The apathy of the great cities of Manchester, Liverpool, and Newcastle help to illustrate what is advanced above. The Cathedral of Edinburgh, though a graceful work, cannot compare with the old mediæval ministers.

image of the saint in its sweet, calm beauty, the stone gargoyle in its repulsive ugliness; all this and the hundred other details, strange and fantastic, but many of them of exquisite beauty, taught the people their lessons of time and eternity, of death and life, of the world of sight and of the world of revelation.

But when the printed paper book was invented. the book of stone, with its magnificent and costly pictures, was gradually superseded. Then was introduced into life of the nations a new agency, a power at first but imperfectly comprehended, but which as years passed on changed and modified and eventually took the place of all the earlier ways of communicating thought and instruction.

At first all this may seem a fanciful, possibly a fantastic,

THE TOWER OF GLOUCESTER.

idea, but it will bear examining. As we sit in the old and solemn garden of the Gloucester Monastery and gaze on the vast pile rising up before us with its sweet pale colouring, with its rich and varied decoration, so delicate and yet so massive, seemingly so fragile and yet so strong in its per-

fect beauty, we can test the strange assertion of the great French Romancist,* which he has worked out with so much skill and truth and daring fancy; his curious assertion, "The Book has killed the building."

The fifteenth century witnessed the beginning of printing; from Mayence issued the early specimens

of the new craft which was to exercise so measureless an influence over the destinies of the world. For a time no appreciable weakening in the power of the old building art was noticeable; it is true this century, A.D. 1400 — 1500, witnessed few, it any, of those great triumphs of church architecture which had been the peculiar glory of the centuries which immediately preceded it; it was not an age which created new abbeysornew cathedrals. but the in-

ventive power still remained, and the dreamer in the old cloister garden, as he watched the setting sun light up the mighty tower which crowned the

^{*} Compare the two remarkable chapters in Victor Hugo's "Nôtre Dame de Paris,"—Abbas beati Martini, and Ceci tuera cela.

fair cathedral, bathing its pale grey stones, its wondrous carving, with a splendour of ruddy gold, as he looked up to that mighty tower, the work of that very period, felt that in the fifteenth century the hand of the monk-artist had not lost as yet its cunning, or the busy brain its wondrous inventive skill.

But with the beautiful work of that age the story of the building of the Abbey of St. Peter was closed. The printing-press of Mayence was busy with its work, and the architect as yet was busy too. The book of stone and the book of paper for a few years worked side by side. Outside the monks built the tower with its unsurpassed beauty and grace. Within, the perfect Lady Chapel, now, alas! a scarred and pathetic ruin, was adorned with its marvels of delicate lace tracery, which still hang on the scarred and broken walls, with its wealth of colour, with its glory of jewelled glass. Yes, the monk-architect and the printer worked side by side till the years of the fifteenth century were told. Then the monk-artist, the tireless monk-architect, laid aside pencil and graving-tool,

No one has told the story, but after the last years of that eventful century, in the fair Abbey, the glory of the Severn Lands, which throws its mighty shadow across the dreamer's garden of the cloister, the clink of trowel and pickaxe was never heard again, save for some bit of absolutely necessary repair. The old builders' work was over and done,* a new and mightier power had arisen, a greater influence was at work. The French Romancist's words—no mere assertion of empty rhetoric—are literally true, "The book has killed the building."

In the sixteenth century, when the printed book had supplanted the abbey and the cathedral as the great educational power, the inspiration which created the magnificent designs which had built and remodelled so many stately homes of prayer and teaching, no longer dwelt among the homes of men as it had been wont to do in the stirring and eventful Middle Ages. Lacking that true inspiration which had suggested the nobler forms of Gothic architecture, the builder and architect in the sixteenth century, conscious of the lack of the genius

which originates, set himself to copy. He took as his models the old work of Greece and Rome, the expression rather of pagan than of Christian thought, passing by altogether the work of the comparatively newer Mediæval and Christian schools of architecture which had created the Gothic cathedral in all its exquisite variety. The Classic ideal, rather than the Gothic ideal, became gradually the aim of the architect and builder. Men have dignified this school with the high-sounding title of Renaissance. But the old art which built the cathedral and abbey of the Middle Ages was dead.

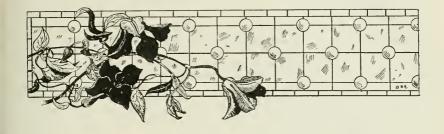
The watcher or the dreamer in the old Gloucester garden, as he thinks over the glories and the beauties, and remembers the voices and the silences of the slowly mouldering pile before him, and muses upon the many noble reliques there of the great religious ages of mediæval Christianity—reliques scarred and discoloured, some even shattered—but still lovely with a sad pathetic beauty, can call to mind no examples of Renaissance work in the abbey he loves, save a few insignificant monuments remarkable for their utter lack of grace, and even of commonplace prettiness.

* * * * *

The red glow of the setting sun slowly fades from even the topmost pinnacles of the great tower; the carved stones resume their pale grey colouring. In the garden of the cloister it grows quite dark, a solemn hush reigns over the old-world scenes, in the dusky gloaming now and then a quivering bat darts across the garden. To the dreamer though, other forms seem to move over the darkening grass plot, and to pass in and out of the little doors from the garden to the deep-shadowed cloister walks. But the dreamer is beginning to dream in real earnest; he must leave his garden and shadowland and go back once more into real life.

It has been the happy work of the last half of the nineteenth century to restore much of the old life of praise and prayer and teaching. The key of the people's hearts has been found, and in the immediate future the Cathedral is destined to play an important part in the religious life of our country.

^{*} And Gloucester is but one instance of the strange silence which fell on most of the great church building work in England, Germany, and France—after the fifteenth century religious architecture died—I am only speaking here of religious architecture, but I should not be far wrong if I omitted the word religious and made my assertion broader.



OCCUPATIONS FOR GENTLEWOMEN.

I.—LACE WORK AND EMBROIDERY.

By Kineton Parkes.

THE needle has so long been associated with the work of women, that it has acquired a certain fitness, which, despite the efforts of the propagandists of the "new woman" phase, will always obtain. The highest functions of women are those of wife and mother, and the proper exercise of such functions can only be thoroughly carried out needle in hand. But there are many women who are not yet wives, and many who will never be; nevertheless, the needle still may for them be regarded as an emblem, a symbol of independence. There may be great joy in its use; we can never know of the world of bliss which a mother may have in the fabrication of some of the products of her needle; and hidden from us, too, is the ecstasy which prompted the infinite labour and care bestowed upon the vestments worn in the services of the church. Here are two respects in which an industrious pursuit may be followed with an enthusiasm which transforms it almost into an act of worship. When, however, we consider how much work has been produced by the industry of the wielder of the needle, which has had no such impetus, we are faced by the fact that it has been done solely for the purpose of making a living. In times gone by, this was an easier matter than is the case now,

for various things have combined to make times harder, and we have grown accustomed to things which we regard as necessaries, which were then regarded as luxuries. In simpler times, simpler living sufficed; but, in our more complicated times, there is still room for work, beautiful in design and in fabrication, and still room for those who are anxious to do such work.

Lace and embroidery have much in common, their chief differences being, that in the former we look for extreme beauty of workmanship, in the latter for beautiful colour harmonies. In both, of course, design is presupposed. Embroidery is, for the most part, on a wider scale than lace, and a more striking effect can be got, with smaller Moreover, embroidery is more marketable at the present time than lace, for, while the uses to which lace may be put are distinctly limited, the uses of embroidery are day by day becoming more varied, and particularly in the decoration of the home is it ever increasingly employed. Both are used to a considerable extent in the services of the various churches. Lace, however, is only found to any considerable extent in use in Catholic churches, while embroidery is more employed in the services of the Church of England. Much of the ecclesiastical lace in

present use is of the most exquisite character, but there seems no effort on the part of the clergy to encourage its further production. In the Church of England, however, embroidery is more and more in demand as time goes on.

It is essential that any one who now takes up either lace-work or embroidery should have had a training in art. The facilities are now so many and so near at hand, that no excuse is possible for the evasion of this essential. For any one to take up either branch of our subject merely for the purpose of producing lace or embroidery is as useless as it is for any one to take to writing merely for the purpose of producing another mediocre novel. We must have something worthy or we can do better without it, and I counsel no one to take up any craft or branch of art who has not thoroughly fitted herself or himself in its rudiments and necessities. I regard as an absolute necessity for the productions of lace-work and embroidery, not only a general training in freehand drawing, but a special training in design and in the history and principles of ornament. The first essential is to be able to draw what one sees; the second is to be able to draw what one imagines; and the third and greatest essential is to be able to imagine. If one can do all these things, and, in addition, be able to work out in the material for which the design is made, the design, then one becomes not only a master of a craft, but an artist, or in other words, a creator, in addition.

Presupposing that all the necessary training of which I have spoken has been acquired, and that one is an expert in the craft of embroidering, and, in addition, capable also of producing an original design, we will set to work at the beginning to imagine a piece of work. In the first place, we must decide what form it is to take; what the piece is to be used for. Say we wish to produce a portiere for a drawing-room. As a general rule, a portiere is required to be of a heavy material, which, when hung, will naturally drape itself in long vertical folds. We will take a heavy plush, or velvet of some dark and rich, but not obtrusive, colour, which shall serve as a background for the design to be built upon it. The colour of this background must always be borne in mind. When we begin our design we must remember that, as the portiere will hang vertically, our design must not be of a squat or sitting nature, but one which will lend itself to the upright position of the hanging. Its general lines must be vertical, and, as its lower portion reaches the floor, the whole mass of the design must be found at the bottom of the hanging. From this solid portion at the bottom, the design may gradually be built up; and as the portiere will not reach to the ceiling, the design should slowly and gradually become less solid as its upper portions are reached. Geometrical designs will not suit such a purpose. A design founded on something out of nature's book is best; it may be conventionalised, but it must be left free and flowing as is nature's wont. No border and no frieze is required for such a purpose; let the sides and upper portion be as little evident as it is possible to make them. When the actual work of embroidering is commenced, care should be taken to select silks or cottons which are no violation of nature's laws. Do not use the colours of the tradesman's samples, but the colours of nature, and use them judiciously. Stick to your design in its essentials, but give free play to your fancy in details, and you will produce a free and flowing work, devoid of stiffness, and bearing the impress of hand, heart, and head instead of that of the machine. You cannot be too loving with your work; however small and insignificant the piece may be, treat it as though it was a great work; and when you have produced small works in such a manner, you will be prepared to execute your chef d'œuvre.

The uses to which embroidery is now put are in the main two only: for the decoration of the home, and for use and decoration in churches. As far as the first is concerned, more and more embroidery of a good sort is being used, including portieres, mantel borders and hangings, screens, cushions, table-cloths, and bed-spreads; and, in Protestant churches, there are a number of altar cloths in embroidery now being used, and more are being ordered-some churches having as many as threefor different occasions. Nothing is more decorative in the home than embroidery, and a room is almost furnished which has embroidered curtains, mantel-fall and portiere. And one great advantage good embroidery has, which is, that if well-fashioned, it is practically indestructible if treated with due care. If it is good in design and good in colour, and the best materials, which are the only good ones, have been used, a piece of embroidery is always a precious possession.

Embroidery, as we find it being made at the present day, is mainly of three varieties. There is what is called "appliqué," the method of making which is to embroider the pieces to form the pattern separately, and then to apply them upon the plain ground, and fix them thereon by stitching with embroidery silk. The second variety is the commonest form; it consists in the preparation of a piece of plain cloth, velvet or silk, upon which the pattern is impressed in chalk or by other means; the lines thus formed are then obliterated by embroidering over them with the threads. The third variety is that known as "Leek embroidery," which is of a somewhat composite nature, and more complicated than either of the others, and, as a general rule, more beautiful. In this instance the ground is not plain, but consists of a figured textile such as velvet, silk, or cotton, the pattern being either printed or woven. The embroiderer works upon this pattern, obliterating parts only of it with her silks, and, treating the background in the same way, a very fine and rich effect is produced. It is very probable that the Leek embroidery will become the favourite form in course of time, and it is certainly very elegant and artistic work.

Lace is mainly of two kinds; pillow-lace and point-lace, and is of more recent origin than embroidery, which latter has come down to us from very early times indeed. Somewhere about the close of the fifteenth century, or the beginning of the sixteenth, either Quentin or Jean Matsys painted a picture of a girl engaged in making pillow-lace, which picture may still be seen in the church of St. Gammar, at Lierre. This is the earliest record we have of lace-making, but since that time, the industry has increased and grown to very considerable proportions, so that, at the present time, we find it in existence in many and widely-separated localities. The names which have been given to the laces sufficiently indicate these localities. In point-lace, or lace which is made by means of a needle upon a parchment ground, we have Venetian, Portuguese, Maltese, and Brussels. In pillowlace we have Spanish, Flemish, Dutch, Limerick, Honiton, and Buckinghamshire. I am inclined to think that where the industry has declined, there are the places where the beauty and quality of the ace is less good than it was.

In designing for lace we are not met with the colour problem, but in its place we are compelled

to devote all the more attention to graceful line and to detail. We have to follow, to a certain extent, the traditions of lace-design, but new departures, as long as they are possible in the medium, are always desirable and acceptable. The best method of making a working design for lace is to make a sketch in pencil, elaborating all details, and then, when this is complete, on a black background, transfer the pattern, and then carefully work it in with a very fine brush charged with Chinese white. This gives the best effect of lace, and makes a very useful diagram to work to. Real lace, as it is called to distinguish it from lace produced by machinery, is used for a variety of purposes, but for the most part for adornment of the person. It is associated with state occasions; it is so costly that it is not for every-day use. Lace is a heir-loom of importance in many old families, and the family lace is often as valuable as the family jewels.

In the case of a Royal christening, the interest seems to centre upon the lace; in the case of a Royal wedding the bride's trousseau includes a considerable quantity of lace; in the list of the wedding presents lace figures largely. In the services of the Catholic Church much beautiful lace is used: the altar-cloth of the finest linen is enriched with lace; the costly vestments of the priests on occasions of rejoicing or of woe are covered with lace; and, in some churches, the vestments of the acolytes, and even the boys of the choir, are edged and trimmed with lace. It therefore follows that a considerable amount of lace is in constant use, but much of it is very old. If, however, new lace can be made now, the beauty of which shall be as great as that of the ancient pieces, there is no reason why its use should not become more and more extended.

As we have seen, the making of lace and embroidery is essentially an employment for women, yet in the consideration to which this series of articles is devoted, we have to answer the question as to whether, at the present day, it is an employment of a remunerative character. In spite of the fact that charges of frivolity are often made against the female portion of the population of to-day, I am inclined to think that the desire on the part of girls to make themselves independent is on the increase. The enormously increased number who go in for higher education, who take their degrees or sit for other examinations, is the

readiest indication of this, for a large proportion of such are candidates for posts in the educational world. In the business world, too, we see women making their way. But there are women who are not fitted for teachers, and who are of too retiring a nature for a business career, who are yet quite as anxious to earn their own living; and moreover, there are many who are on the outlook for some serious occupation for their leisure hours without any thought of payment. To these latter we would cordially recommend either of the branches of industry with which this article deals. But in recommending any one to take up lace or embroidery as a means of earning money, our task becomes one of a graver nature.

The first question which naturally arises is, "Is there a market for lace and embroidery?" The second is, "If there is not a market, is it at all likely that one can be made?" Both lace and embroidery are, as everyone knows, used now to a very limited extent. Both are now being made by machinery; lace to a very large extent, embroidery in an increasing degree. In spite of these things, however, there is one thing upon which we may always certainly reckon, which is, that beautiful work done in a serious spirit can always be disposed of. The increased number of exhibitions devoted to works of the industrial arts and the crafts, offer so many new outlets for the sale of lace and embroidery. Such exhibitions will be, undoubtedly, on the increase, and this selling of articles, on a semi-cooperative principle, will form a new feature of the future. To sell works of art to the proprietor of a shop is never, and has never been, a very desirable or a very remunerative thing to the person who has devoted, say, months of labour to the production of some beautiful thing. It therefore behoves anyone who intends setting out upon such work to discover some means of directing the results of her energies into some channel where a remunerative return may be secured. It should not be difficult to find such nowadays.

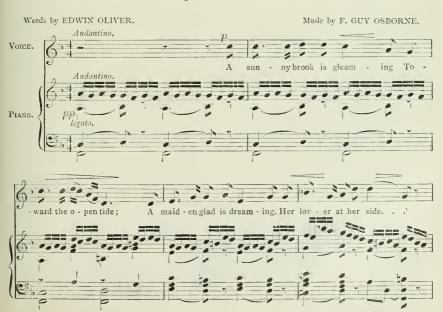
Now, as to the conditions under which such work should be produced. The crafts have first to be learned, the actual processes of making lace or embroidery. Then there are the designs to be made or to be selected, which requires a training in art. I regard this latter as being as absolutely essential as the knowledge of the craft. Under what conditions the old beautiful laces and embroideries were produced, I do not know; but I know that for beautiful new lace, and beautiful new embroidery, the producer must be an artist as well as the possessor of the craft. The craft of lace-making is certainly a difficult one, and the difficulty of learning it is increased by the difficulty of finding places where it is taught. Instruction in lace-making may be had, however, at Honiton now, and efforts are being made in other counties than Devonshire to revive an old industry by rearing a race of young exponents of it. The craft of embroidering is less complicated, but still one which requires a certain amount of preparation, though, perhaps, a shorter apprenticeship than that required by lace-making. There are several establishments where embroidering is taught, notably at the well-known school of embroidery at Leek, presided over by Mrs. Thomas Wardle. Here, as elsewhere, large pieces of embroidery in process of fabrication may always be seen, both for church and for domestic purposes, and each school is acquiring a character which singles out its wants from that of other schools. The productions of the Leek School, for instance, are now known as "Leek embroideries" and, as other establishments become as well known, their examples will, doubtless, acquire as distinctive a character.

There is no employment for women which is more beautiful than lace-making and embroidery, and into it as much devotion may be infused as any painter could give to the painting of his picture, or any poet the writing of his verses. Lace and embroidery are works of art, and in their production the true artistic spirit is imperatively required.





Contrasts.









CHAPTER VI.

I NTO most families there seems to be thrown a sort of Pandora's box, in the shape of some refractory member who proves a source of grief or trouble to all the rest. In the case of the earl's family, this was no other than the younger daughter. As a rule, the individual enjoying this family honour is of the male sex, and, very often, a younger son; but in this instance the distinction was claimed by a lady; and certainly, in her younger years at least, she gave satisfactory proof that the scapegrace of a household may be represented quite as well by a daughter as by a son.

From earliest childhood she had given indications of an alarming nature, being so prone to mischief that the utmost vigilance on the part of her nurse had failed to avert certain grave disasters, such as nearly setting the house on fire by kindling some fuel in that lady's wardrobe, in revenge for being confined in the room where it stood; turning on the water in the wash-house, and so flooding the adjoining rooms; releasing the gamekeeper's weasels from what she considered an unjust captivity, and thereby causing a massacre among the poultry; not to mention her own personal mishaps, such as swinging herself over the banister, falling into the fish-pond, from which she was rescued just in time by a gardener, who seriously twisted his arm in the attempt, and a few more of an equally perilous character.

After this first distressing period of infantile misdemeanours, she entered upon another scarcely

less fraught with anxiety to her guardians. The gardens around the castle no longer confined her adventurous steps, which were now wont to stray to the cottages and farms in the vicinity, where she found a number of congenial associates among the rough, unmannerly boys who played among stables and barns. For it soon became apparent that the young lady had a decided preference for playmates of the other sex, and eschewed those of her own. So much so, indeed, that her mother was impelled to invite a cousin of Jessy's own age to remain with her for an indefinite term, in the hope that the companionship of so decorous a little maiden would counteract the malign influence of the village ruffians. The result, however, proved the reverse of what was expected; for Jessy led the guileless Flora into such dire scrapes that, fearful for the consequences, Lady Douglas was constrained to end the visit, and restore the child to her parents.

Nor did the additional restraints put upon the culprit succeed much better, as her wit readily supplied means of eluding them. By degrees both her speech and manners became so exact a reproduction of those of her playmates of the stables, that her mother and the nurse were driven almost distracted to know what was to be done.

Upon one occasion, after a severe altercation, the nurse in despair avowed she would leave her mistress's service if the present state of things continued; whereupon Miss Jessy, perfectly unmoved by so startling an announcement, replied, in accents of the purest Doric: "Hoots, ye auld nowt! ye micht gang further an' fare waur." Between amaze-

ment at the cool rejoinder, and an irresistible inclination to laugh, good Mrs. Houston was struck dumb, and turned her back suddenly lest her discomfiture should be observed. But when, that same evening, she rehearsed the dialogue in the servauts' hall, there was a burst of merriment and applause which it would have been fatal for the shrewd young lady to hear.

On another occasion, when she had been reprimanded for accompanying the gamekeeper in a delightful rat-killing excursion in very strong terms by Mrs. Houston, who was voluble at all times, but particularly so when she scolded, the bold delinquent promptly rejoined, "Dinna flyte, ye crabbit besom, or ye'll ding me clean daft. It's a lang lane that has nae turnin'." Whether she meant to indicate by the last words a prospect of eventual amendment, or, as was more likely, merely repeated them parrot fashion, is uncertain: but, as she surveyed the diminutive figure of the speaker, and noted the arch look that accompanied the words, Mrs. Houston, unable to contain herself, burst into a fit of laughter so hearty, that the tears ran down her cheeks; a proceeding which completely nullified all her previous admonitions.

Then, again, on one of Mr. Dunbar's periodic ministerial visits, she greatly astonished the worthy man by asking him the meaning of that text: "They need a lang spune wha sup kail wi' the de'il." He had never heard his native tongue more fluently spoken, and, instead of rebuking her ignorance of the Scriptures, he bestowed on her a benignant, half-amused smile, and said, although there was no such text in the Bible, there were others with precisely the same meaning, which she would understand better as she grew older. Then, turning to Lady Douglas, whose face had not yet cooled from the hot flush called up by her daughter's words, he remarked how careful parents required to be in their behaviour, as children were so ready to copy their example. Thereupon the discerning Jessy nonplussed them still further by chiming in: "Yes, Mr. Dunbar, nurse often says, 'As the auld cock craws, the young ane learns.' Is that in the Bible?"

Mr. Dunbar looked round as if he hardly believed his ears, and at sight of the shrewd little inquisitive face, with its comical expression, he laughed outright. Lady Douglas was obliged to laugh too, though she requested the child to run away to the nursery, lest her acute ears should lead to further embarrassment.

Perhaps none suffered more from Jessy's freaks than Miss Strong, the governess, who, in this case at any rate, found it anything but a "delightful task to teach the young idea how to shoot." Indeed, here the "young idea" would not "shoot" in any direction but its own, and that was at all times a wrong one. She learned rapidly when she felt so inclined; but her application to her studies was of so precarious a nature that she made only slow progress. The poor governess coaxed, encouraged, threatened by turns: all in vain. At last, in sheer hopelessness, she resigned the task, and Jessy was rid for a time of discipline.

Her parents held a long consultation on the matter, which resulted in a decision to send her to a school in Edinburgh. She had now reached the age of thirteen, and it was imperative that her education should be completed; a prospect which her present deficiencies made extremely remote. Accordingly, to Edinburgh she was sent, where she boarded with a Miss Russell, an unmarried cousin of her mother, whose reputation as a strict disciplinarian constituted her a fitting guardian for the wayward girl. Under her roof, if anywhere, she was likely to learn methodical habits, and that decorum and refinement of which at present she seemed so deplorably destitute.

With Miss Russell she remained during the next two years - years which that lady had cause to remember for the rest of her life. If precept and example could have effected a reformation, Jessy. on the expiration of her term as a pupil in the rigid school of discipline represented by Miss Russell, ought to have been a model of propriety and ladylike demeanour; but, unfortunately, a stronger power than the one or the other is needed to produce such a result as a change of character or even of behaviour: love alone can achieve this. And, in this instance, love was wanting. Miss Russell, though an excellent woman in all essential points, and a pious woman besides, had, through living so much alone, lost sympathy with young natures, and also, as a natural consequence, the power of controlling them. Honourable almost to a fault; upright and straightforward in all her dealings with her fellow-men, whose welfare she sought to the best of her ability to promote; scrupulously con-

scientious, and generous to every deserving cause, she, nevertheless, showed no forbearance with wrongdoing or folly, her own strength of character making her intolerant of weakness in others. At the same time there was not the slightest trace of self-righteousness in her character: the indignation she felt at wickedness was due to her own deep sense of justice, and that love of truth which is ever the sign of a noble nature. No; it was in minor details that her defects lay. A solitary life had fostered, as it must ever do, the peculiarities of her nature; and the unbroken routine of duties, and the regularity of habits through a long series of years, had confined these peculiarities to such a degree, that the slightest variation in her mode of life became painful, indeed, almost impossible. No wonder, then, that she contemplated, with grave misgivings, the advent of a young girl to her house, wherein-

> "Each table, chair, and stool Stood in its place, or moving, moved by rule."

Indeed, had she known how well-founded were these misgivings, it is very unlikely that even her regard for Lady Douglas would have induced her to make the experiment. Before Jessy had been a week under her roof, she heartily repented of having done so. The astounding revelations of lawlessness, the most complete she had ever imagined, the open defiance of prescribed rules, and the countless eccentricities of dress and deportment, fairly drove the good lady to distraction. All her preconceived ideas of what a young lady should be were driven to the winds, and she beheld in her new boarder the very embodiment of the things to which she had a special antipathy.

When, on the first morning after her arrival, the bell rang prompt at eight o'clock for prayers, Jessy failed to appear, and the maid, having been despatched to learn the reason, found her still sound asleep. This in itself was a grave dereliction of duty, but Miss Russell, in consideration of the long journey of yesterday, was prepared to overlook it, and would, doubtless, have done so had not the offender shown herself utterly unconscious of any shortcoming at all. Still, despite the violent shock to her feeling, she forebore to give further expression to her displeasure than what was indicated by her countenance, in itself a sufficient rebuke.

A further trial was furnished by the inspection of Miss Jessy's room after she had left it. Miss

Russell stood aghast at sight of the chaos it presented. The contents of two boxes lav heaped in hopeless confusion on the floor. The drawers had been pulled open, and some articles of clothing thrust into them pell-mell, so that not one of them would properly close. The wardrobe had fared no better, as part of the skirt of a dress appeared under the door, which was only partially shut, while the leg of a stocking dangled over the top of one of the drawers on the other side. But what chiefly excited Miss Russell's ire was the ignominious treatment accorded to various timehonoured ornaments, which had been ruthlessly thrust from their ancient positions, and huddled together out of the way like so much rubbish, to make room for a lot of new-fangled gewgaws, each of which told its own tale of vanity. Could therehave been greater sacrilege than was exhibited in the case of a venerable sampler, wrought by some great-aunt in the days of old, which the newcomer, after examination, had hung upside down, and with a bias to one side, which gave it a most ridiculous look? Or was it like a well-constituted mind to hang a jaunty hat on the marble bust of John Milton, which graced a small bookcase in the corner? Miss Russell answered these questions with a decided negative, and a shake of the head which spoke volumes.

Very soon, however, Jessy's behaviour became such that Miss Russell could no longer keep silence, and open warfare was the result. As, however, good often comes out of evil, this crisis proved serviceable in disclosing to each of the disputants. the respective strength and weakness of her oppo-At any rate, they got on better for a while after the contest, and eventually the old maid came to discover the amiable traits in Jessy's character, and thus learn more forbearance with her faults. It must be owned, however, that she had much the harder trial of patience, for, from the first day to the last of Jessy's residence under her roof, the regularity of the household was interrupted. The young lady was invariably late for meals, utterly regardless of time on all occasions: in fact, so erratic in her movements, that Miss Russell could never rely upon her keeping to any arrangement. Nevertheless they managed to get along without any serious ruptures. And, indeed, Miss Russell found herself so much the loser in these, that she avoided them whenever she

could. For Jessy had a hundred ways of annoying her which she was powerless to cope with. For instance, when reading her part of the chapter at prayers, she would wilfully mispronounce words in such a way as to make the servants laugh. Or she would tie a cork to the cat's tail, and send it into the parlour half-frantic with its efforts to get rid of the awkward appendage.

Once, in retaliation for her gnardian's refusal to allow of her accompanying some friends to the theatre, she vented her spleen on the moffending portrait of some female ancestor of a remote age, whose hooked nose she turned to such advantage that, with a few touches of her brush, she contrived to produce a startling likeness to a parrot with a hood on its head and a ruff round its neck.

Of this piece of mischief, however, she sincerely repented on seeing the genuine pain it cost Miss Russell, and she did her best to remedy it; but, alas! the parrot's beak could not be effaced from the canvas, which presented so horrible a caricature of the human features, that the picture was taken down and consigned to the obscurity of the garret.

Course of time led to a better understanding between the old and the young lady, who each came to appreciate the other's good qualities, and make allowances for weaknesses to a certain extent. For Jessy, although a very tricksie at this period of her life, was absolutely free from anything like malice or vindictive feeling; while Miss Russell's real excellence became apparent even under all her crotchets, and in a measure reconciled her head strong relative to them. Nevertheless, it was a welcome release to both when Jessy's school term ended, and she quitted Edinburgh for home.

When the hour of parting arrived, she suffered a momentary pang of remorse for all her past misdemeanours; and, the delight of freedom making her benevolent, she, to Miss Russell's speechless amazement, flung her arms round the shrivelled neck, so little accustomed to such caresses, and, with a spasmodic hug and a jerky kiss, she sprang into the chaise and drove away before the good lady could recover from her astonishment.

On her return to Douglas Castle, the hopes of improvement entertained by the household were speedily dissipated. It is true her propensity to mischief had been considerably checked, but her eccentricities seemed proportionally developed.

During the first week of her residence at home,

she surprised them all by exhibiting an enthusiasm for painting. This was an art which Miss Russell had always discouraged, especially after the sample she had had of its fatal tendency in regard to the mutilated portrait, and which, consequently, Jessy all the more ardently pursued. So now at six o'clock in the morning the zealous artist rose, and, with all the requisites of her art, sallied forth from the castle, in quest of a certain mill beside the stream in the valley. The beauty of the spot had attracted her eye, and, all aglow with the aspirations of conscious genius, she proceeded thither.

When the family assembled on this particular morning to breakfast, Jessy's absence was remarked. and one of the maids said she had noticed her leaving the house very early, almost before anyone was astir. Nor did she return until midday, in a condition which struck dismay to the heart of her mother, who saw her approach from an upper window. Her boots were begrimed with reddish mud; her dress was bedraggled and torn; her dishevelled hair was flowing free to the winds; and her hat was hanging down her back-a happy chance, as its battered state remained concealed. Under her arm she was triumphantly bearing the implements of her work. Exclamations of horror assailed her as she entered the house, but they failed to intimidate or to damp the spirits of one who felt herself above such sordid trifles as attire or food. Quite unabashed by her mother's mild rebuke, she sought her own room, to display to her maid, as an inestimable privilege, this the first production of her genius. The canvas was unveiled before Jenny's wondering eyes, but her remarks soon proved her totally unfit to appreciate such a privilege. She actually suggested that the mill looked very much to one side, and that the chimney seemed on fire, so voluminous was the smoke issuing from it. Then as to the mill-wheel, its outline exhibited so many irregularities, its poise was so peculiar, and its size so much out of proportion to the mill itself, whose oblique position has already been noticed, that it seemed on the point of dragging the whole edifice into the stream below, which was in a frothy condition not unlike churned milk. In short, the result of this experiment was that the inappreciative maid henceforth saw only the backs of her mistress's pictures.

Still the flame of genius is not easily quenched nor did the young artist desist from her pursui after this first essay. She continued her matutinal rambles in all weathers, until a violent cold seized her, from which she did not recover for several weeks. Thereafter, the canvas was abandoned for a time, and the piano took its place. As long as the musical craze lasted, the family were in durance vile; for she practised for hours each day, to the imminent risk of the instrument, and the no small discomfort of all ears within hearing distance.

Of late, however, her enthusiasm had manifested itself in a new direction, which promised better results than the others. This was nothing else than an ardent desire to minister to the wants of the people in the district.

The acquaintance she had made with them in her early days seemed to have left agreeable recollections; accordingly, she was now constantly making demands on the larder at home for delicacies which the cook declared quite incompatible with the appetites of poor folks. Moreover, her wardrobe became speedily thinned, and all available clothing belonging to the others of the household was unceremoniously carried off to the new objects of her commiseration. Her brother Stephen had been one day much taken aback by seeing a labourer's son clad in a velvet jacket of his own, which he had believed in his own wardrobe at home; and Harry had come into the castle very indignant because he had seen a tipsy man staggering along the village street fully attired in his own shooting costume.

Disagreeable details by-and-by came to the knowledge of the lavish benefactress, showing that her generosity had been grievously abused in cases seemingly the most deserving. Worse than this, however, she got into serious trouble through interfering in a family quarrel which she thought her friendly mediation might settle to the satisfaction of all parties; and in her perplexity she was obliged to apply for assistance to the Rev. Mr. Dunbar, in whose judgment she had implicit confidence,

But the interview with that gentleman must form the subject of another chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MINISTER OF GLENATHOLE,

As Kenneth Errol and his sister drove along the moonlit road on their way from Douglas Castle, a

feeling of restraint kept both silent for some time. It is a fact rather difficult of explanation that our nearest friends are just those to whom we are most reluctant to unbosom ourselves on matters touching our inner experiences; and perhaps there is no subject more scrupulously guarded from the introspection of parents, brothers, sisters, &c., than that in which they are most prone to be interested, viz., an attachment such as had been formed by Kenneth Errol. Why it should be so let philosophers judge, if, indeed, their dry and abstruse studies admit of questions so utterly mundane.

Miss Errol, who had long been cognisant of her fair young friend's secret love for her brother, had nevertheless been unable hitherto to gauge the nature and extent of his regard for Ada Douglas. His attentions were wont to be shared by so many admirers, and his own playful carelessness in the matter rendered it hard to discover whether, in this case, he was serious or not. The occurrences of to-night, however, had strengthened her surmise that his interview with her friend had been of no trifling nature; and the look of settled happiness on the young girl's face told its own tale. Still she forbore to question her silent companion, until he himself led the way to it by asking her how she had enjoyed the evening.

"Very much," she answered. "It seems to have been a particularly happy one for you."

"Yes; what makes you think so?" he rejoined, pretending to be absorbed in guiding the horse, while a smile stole over his handsome face.

"Oh, I'm not absolutely blind, you know," was Mary's reply, as she turned her inquiring gaze upon him; "and sisters have quick intuitions in certain matters."

"Sisters often see things that have no existence save in their own imaginations. But let me hear why you think I was particularly happy to-night."

"Perhaps you will save me the trouble by furnishing the explanation yourself."

"There the true woman speaks. When asked to do a thing, she won't; when not asked, she will. Won't you be frank, and disclose your secret? I'm all impatience to hear it, since I can't imagine what it can be."

"Oh, no; of course not. But perhaps Ada will be more communicative than you have been. I'll ask her."

"And what do you think she would say?"

"Precisely what you won't say, but what I am pretty sure of even without any further confirmation."

"And that is-"

"That she has been foolish enough to listen to your nonsense, and believe that you——"

"Love her," supplemented the young man in ardent tones, as he drew nearer to his sister; "and she believes rightly, for I would lay down my life for her sake. Who would not for one so lovely as she is? But tell me, Mary, do you think she has cared for me all along?"

"That is a very impertinent question, and truly characteristic of a conceited youth like yourself," replied his sister, trying to disguise her satisfaction under a stern demeanour; "but since you are really in earnest, and seem sensible of your good fortune in winning such a prize, I will confess that Ada has long given you the preference over all her other lovers. She never said so to me, but I saw it, and I never would have betrayed the secret to you, had you not had the good sense to make the discovery yourself. But, Kenneth "-here her voice assumed grave, earnest tones, that evidently came from her very heart-"see that you never vex her by paying attention to others. You and I have always differed on this subject, you know; but I cannot think it a mark of a noble or generous nature to even risk wounding the feelings of any woman by seeming to regard her with special admiration. Men love to gratify their vanity in this way-yes, they do, Kenneth, as you yourself know very well-a meanness for which I despise them; but it can never be right to purchase such amusement at the expense of others' pain."

"Go on, Mary," said Kenneth, smiling at her warmth. "Mr. Dunbar himself could hardly preach better; certainly not more directly. Is the sermon nearly done?"

"Yes; only I come to the application, which is that, however addicted to flirtation a man may previously have been, he is bound by all the laws of honour and integrity to relinquish the same contemptible pursuit when he has sought and won the affections of the woman who is to be his wife. If he does not, then he forfeits all right to her respect, and all chance of happiness."

"Well, Mary, if it were not that decorum forbids it, I would cry bravo to that admirable sermon; but your remarks would have more weight if I knew

they were the result of your experience. May I ask if that is the case?"

He surveyed his sister's countenance with an arch look of mischievous satisfaction as he noted the sudden change of expression produced by his words, and the blush that even in the moonlight was discernible. However, she quickly rallied and said.—

"The test of my words must be the experience of all who have ever made the experiment. This, at least, I hope you will remember, that you have secured a prize to-night which you cannot too highly value. And let me tell you, Kenneth, with all her gentleness and loving disposition, Ada Douglas has some of the pride of her race, and should she ever have cause to imagine herself slighted or unjustly wronged, she will renounce you, and hide her broken heart in silence. This is true, for I know her well."

"You don't seem to know me so well, however," retorted Kenneth, in tones of offended dignity, "else you would scarcely insinuate doubts of that kind, I think."

"Oh, Kenneth, I did not mean to hurt your feelings," explained his sister, drawing her arm through his, and scanning his altered looks with sudden compunction. "I only spoke out of concern for your happiness and hers; for I knowdon't be angry, Kenneth—that you are very susceptible of influence, and might be misled by your own easy temperament and your readiness to believe in the sincerity of others."

"I can't see what you mean, Mary," interrupted the brother, still more irritated. "If I am of an easy disposition, and don't suspect everybody as you, it seems, would have me do, what has that to do with the subject we were discussing?"

Mary hesitated before she replied, knowing how unwelcome her words would be, and shrinking from giving offence to the brother she so much loved yet hers was not a soul to shun duty because painful, and she had been trained in a hard school. A moment's silent effort, therefore sufficed to dictate her answer.

"Kenneth, I must speak," she said in low tones "even at the risk of making you angry. There is one whose influence upon your future I dread. I mean Mr. Lesly."

At mention of that name Kenneth turned round almost sharply upon his sister, saying,—

"And what have you got to say against him,

pray?"

"I have no definite charge against him," she answered quietly, yet firmly, "but I distrust him, I know not why, and I begin to fear his influence over you is not good. I wish you were not so intimate with him," she added, with emphatic earnestness.

"Mary, don't be absurd," he said, impatiently. "I suppose your antipathy is due to the fact that I detained you a little this afternoon through going with him to Gull Island; a crime which you were good enough to proclaim to the Douglases to-night. I really must thank you for your contribution to the enjoyment of the evening."

"Oh, Kenneth!" remonstrated Mary; but rising emotion checked further utterance, and they drove on in silence till they reached the stone bridge over the stream which, as has been mentioned, wound through the valley of Dunarnon.

On the parapet of the bridge some one was resting. The spare and slightly stooping figure, and the white hair that flowed over his shoulders, sufficed to tell them that it was Mr. Dunbar, the minister of Glenathole. On recognising them, a smile serene, sweet, and kind broke over his face. It was a face on which no one could look but with veneration, characterised as it was by a chastened peauty. On it peace and love seemed to dwell, casting a "hallowed radiance" over its time-worn eatures. From that clear grey eye truth and ourity seemed to shine; on the fine open brow the lignity of high purpose sat enthroned; while the enderness of the sensitive mouth was but the visible expression of that charity which "suffereth long and is kind," and which "thinketh no evil." Over ll his face beamed the placid sweetness of one who has parted with the dross of self in the furnace of "great tribulation," from which he has come orth with

> "A heart at leisure from itself To soothe and sympathise."

It was with feelings of mutual pleasure that rectings were exchanged. Kenneth's displeasure and Mary's sadness seemed both alike to melt way under the benign smile with which he greeted tem.

"Ah, my young friends, you here, and so late? his is indeed an unexpected pleasure. May I ask what I am indebted for it?" were his words as

he advanced to the conveyance and warmly shook hands with them.

Kenneth sprang down, and bade him mount to a seat between himself and his sister; an invitation which the old man gratefully accepted, as he had come from a visit to a dying boy at a cottage several miles distant, and his own house lay still as many more ahead.

"We have just come from Douglas Castle," said Kenneth in answer to his question; "you know the harvest-home was celebrated there to-night."

"Oh, to be sure! How faulty my memory grows. And you had a merry evening, I presume? Scarcely need to ask you that question, Mr. Kenneth, I can see; your smile is answer in itself. I hope you did not suffer your sister to remain too quiet; she requires more recreation than she is wont to take."

And, as he glanced towards her, a smile of peculiar affection illumined the old man's face.

Perhaps the question was not particularly agreeable to Kenneth at that moment, whose brotherly affection had not been showing itself in the most attractive light shortly before. He was saved the awkwardness of a reply by Mary, who, with a quiet smile, said.—

"Nay, Mr. Dunbar, I am only too prone to attend to *that* duty; I rather stand in need of an exhortation to work more."

"My dear young friend," responded the minister, "you need to be reminded of the old adage: 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.' You know the mind requires rest as well as the body, and healthful recreation is good for both. The mind must have something to divert it from the things that ordinarily engross it, else, like a bow kept constantly on tension, it must lose its elasticity. There is no such thing as monotony in nature; it is full of infinite variety, and, it seems to me, our heavenly Father designed to teach us a lesson thereby. You, I know, have a mistaken idea that recreation such as you have had to-night is somehow displeasing to Him; but, I am sure, provided our hearts are given to Him in the first place, we as little displease Him by indulging in innocent enjoyment as a child displeases its earthly parent by delighting in that parent's gifts. But you will think I am always sermonising, and I know Mr. Kenneth objects to long sermons, so I had better change the subject. And, first, let me inquire for my young friend, Miss Jessy. She, I have no doubt, was the life of the party this evening?"

"Oh, yes; there is little chance of melancholy where she happens to be, she is always so blithe."

"She is indeed. I suppose she would inform you of her trouble in connection with the Bruces?"

"The disreputable family at the Knowe, do you mean?" inquired Mary, in undisguised astonishment.

"Yes. She has been visiting there lately; but, unfortunately, her benevolent intentions have met with a most undeserved return. I expect a call from her to-morrow, to discuss the matter, and assist her out of the difficulty, which I rather think is not very serious. I thought she would be sure to confide in you, as your own experience enables you to advise her quite as well as I am likely to do."

"No, Mr. Dunbar; I never even suspected that she had taken to visiting among the people. She has evidently kept the matter a strict secret, for no one at the castle seems to have any idea of such a thing."

"Then, perhaps, I have unwittingly betrayed her confidence, for which I am sorry; but, really, she is, as a rule, so communicative regarding herself, that I scarcely dreamt she would be reserved with you. Possibly, however, the unpleasant nature of this her first experience in work of the kind prevented her from speaking of it; and, as we all know, she abhors even the appearance of selfpraise, and so very likely withheld any mention of her charitable mission. And such assuredly it is, only I fear her generosity will, in some cases, as the present, be taken advantage of. I must hope that you and she will co-operate, so that I may have two good assistants instead of one, though you yourself, Miss Mary, have almost supplied my son's place. By-the-bye," he suddenly exclaimed, with joyous animation, "I am sure you will both be glad to learn that Raymond has succeeded in winning the scholarship on which his heart was set ? "

"Yes, indeed," assented Kenneth, taking part for the first time in the conversation; "he richly deserves his success, for I know he has worked like a slave. Harry Douglas saw him in Edinburgh some weeks ago, and he declared he looked a very ghost with over-study: I think you should remonstrate with him."

"I hope Mr. Harry exaggerated his sickly appearance," responded the anxious parent; "but I shall write to him this very night; indeed, I had already determined to summon him home, as there is no necessity for his continuing his labours at the Nortons. And now I begin to see the lights of Cliff Cottage peeping out from among the trees up yonder, so I must prepare to step down, if Mr. Kenneth will kindly stop at the bend of the road. I can assure you you have saved me a flyting, as she would call it, from my worthy old Peggy by bringing me home so much sooner than my own limbs would have done. Accept of my best thanks for your kindness. I shall call and see your mother soon, and perhaps bring Raymond with me. Thank you, Mr. Kenneth; I am almost at my own door. I wish you both good-night."

He had alighted from the chaise, and stood for a moment watching it begin its ascent up the hill. In the clear moonlight he could see the manse standing at a little distance from the village of Glenathole. A light glimmered faintly from one of its windows, and quickened his flagging footsteps. A few minutes brought him to the little gate, from which a gravelled path led up to the rustic porch.

It was a humble dwelling, yet dear to everyone that knew it. Around the porch honeysuckle and woodbine clustered in luxuriant festoons, while a rose tree spread itself over nearly the entire front of the house. On either side of the doorway was an arched window with diamond panes, over which hung sprays of the rose tree. The ground in front was adorned with neat little flower-beds, among which grew a rowan and a hawthorn tree, one on each side of the walk. Two windows at the back looked out upon the tidily kept garden, in which both flowers and vegetables abounded, for their cultivation was the minister's favourite recreation; indeed, he was wont to say that some of his happiest thoughts of God had been born among the flowers.

Here, then, in this unpretending abode, Mr. Dunbar's life had been passed; a life whose purity and beauty made his memory fragrant long after he himself had passed away from the scene of his labours. To his home went the sinful, the sorrowful, the sad of all classes. The sympathy he ever felt for woe, from whatsoever cause arising; the counsel he never failed to give to those in perplexity; and the tenderness and wisdom with which

he sought to reclaim the erring, won for him the confidence of all who stood in need of such a friend

Among the people of Glenathole, no rejoicing ever seemed complete without the minister's approving smile; and sorrow lost some of its bitterness when accorded his real, though unobtrusive, sympathy and consolation. And neither was ever sought in vain. The snow might be whirling in blinding eddies down the hillside, and the rain might be driving in drenching showers, but at the call of duty obstacles were not regarded; for to follow his Master's footsteps was the one ruling aim of this simple yet noble life. But few were aware at what cost that single-hearted devotion had been attained; they only felt its effects, and rendered silent homage to the sanctity that pervaded his whole demeanour.

His history had been almost uneventful. The son of a farmer in the north of Scotland, his boyhood had been spent among the mountains and lochs with which the northern counties abound. Yet at an early age aspirations after loftier pursuits than those to which he had been accustomed manifested themselves in the avidity with which he acquired knowledge. His superior intelligence ere long attracted the notice of the proprietor of the estate on which his father's farm was situated, who generously offered to supply means for the further education of his young protégé; an offer gladly accepted. Accordingly, the lad was sent to St. Andrews, where, under suitable training, his talents soon brought him into distinction. His course of study was completed with credit to himself and satisfaction to his benevolent patron, who testified his pleasure by inviting him to spend his vacation under his own roof.

It was during these months that an event occurred which influenced all his subsequent career.

It happened that he had been wandering one summer day beside the banks of the river which flowed through the estate, and reaching a clump of trees growing close to the water's edge, he took advantage of their welcome shade, and threw himself down to read. His attention had become absorbed in his book, when suddenly the sound of rapidly approaching footsteps disturbed him, and presently a man came running eagerly towards him, whose wild and disordered appearance almost pre-

pared him for the startling words now addressed to him. The haste with which they were uttered wellnigh rendered them incoherent.

"Oh! sir, lend me your aid, I beseech you!" cried the stranger, in tones of desperate alarm. "I am pursued; in a few minutes they will be upon me; and unless I can get across the stream, I am lost. My strength is gone, and I can run no farther. I see a boat yonder, and if you will but row me to the other side, I may yet escape. Oh, make haste, if you woul dsave a fellow-creature's life!"

The spectacle of such distress left no room for any other feeling than that of compassion; and John Dunbar sprang to his feet at once, saying: "Come with me; I will row you over in a trice. Take courage; I am a fast rower."

The stranger followed his guide, muttering thanks as best he could, and in another minute they were seated in the light craft and speeding rapidly to the opposite bank. The fugitive sat in the stern, his eye fixed in painful apprehension on the spot where he momently expected to see his pursuers appear. His youthful deliverer, in turn, bent looks of scrutiny on him, which were sufficient to convince him that the man he was rescuing was of no mean origin; for, although the hair was matted and dishevelled, and the face haggard and worn, the marks of noble lineage were sufficiently conspicuous to force the conclusion that he was rendering aid to one in whose fate the nation must be interested. Curiosity at length overcoming his natural bashfulness, he asked the cause of his companion's unhappy plight.

"Nay," replied the stranger, "you must not question me of that; I would not imperil you with the knowledge of my misfortunes. It were ill requital for your kindness should you fall into trouble through suspicion of having abetted my escape. All I ask is that you will be silent regarding this adventure. Thank God! now we are safe. One word before I leave; your name and address. I may be able to reward you yet.

The request was modestly complied with, and the stranger, eyeing his deliverer, said he would remember both, adding, "You are a student; is the church your destiny?"

John Dunbar assented; then, as the boat touched the bank, the fugitive, wringing the hand that had wrought his safety, said, in tones of deep emotion. "I will remember you, should these troubles ever pass, and loyal men be restored to the rights they have forfeited in a noble cause. At present I possess nothing but my life, which I owe to you. God bless you! Farewell."

With these words, he leaped ashore, and, waving adieu, disappeared immediately in an adjacent wood.

John Dunbar had barely time to row back to the other side, moor the boat out of sight, under cover of some bushes, and resume his seat, when the men he expected came upon the scene. On observing him, two of them approached and asked if he had seen a man pass that way. Hereupon John was betrayed into the only piece of duplicity for which he had ever cause to accuse himself; though a conscience less tender than his would have exercised its functions in a case so like virtue. Instead of answering the question, he adroitly parried it by asking them to describe his appearance, which, being found to tally with that whose remembrance was still vivid in his own mind, he acknowledged that a man answering to that description had been on the spot shortly before. He then proceeded to direct them along the path which the fugitive must have taken (discarding, of course, the possible alternative of crossing the river, which the shrewd young student was discreet enough not to suggest, and which, happily, did not occur to the pursuers). Thereupon, hardly waiting to thank their guide, they hastened on, leaving him supremely grateful for having helped to save a fellow-creature from death.

For it was just after the battle of "red Culloden," which "closed the Stuarts' fateful day," when the young Pretender and all his adherents were hunted like deer among the woods and mountains of the north as rebels against their king and country. And now, on reflection, John Dunbar felt convinced that the man whose escape he had so recently effected was one of the many who were sharing the fate of their unhappy prince himself, then wandering in destitution among mountain solitudes, or seeking a precarious shelter in the hovels of a few leal-hearted followers.

Years passed away, and the event was remembered only as a thing of the past. John Dunbar had now completed his theological studies; but just at that time the death of his kind patron left him entirely dependent on his own efforts, and

it was then an exceedingly difficult thing for a young candidate, without patronage, even to bring himself into notice. The disappointed youth was in much suspense and despondency as to his future. At this juncture, to his great surprise, a living in the south-west was presented to him, which he was to occupy at once. The place of his destination was Glenathole, and on arriving there he learned that it was on the estate of Sir Edward Douglas.

In the manse he found a letter awaiting him, which proved to be an invitation from his patron to the castle. Thither accordingly he went, and was ushered into a spacious apartment, whose magnificence was very imposing to his uninitiated eyes. In a short while the door opened and admitted an elderly gentleman, still, however, with an erect bearing, who came forward, took his visitor's hands within his own, and gazed long and earnestly on his features. Mr. Dunbar, in turn, scrutinised the baronet's countenance in mute surprise at so demonstrative a greeting, until memory solved the mystery, and he found himself face to face with the illustrious stranger whom he had rescued years ago.

Yes, it was even so. At that time Sir Edward Douglas had been a zealous partisan of Charles Edward Stuart; and, after his narrow escape on the occasion referred to, he had succeeded in gaining a vessel bound for France, in which country he remained until the restored tranquillity of affairs at home enabled him to return. But he had not forgotten the generous youth who at his own risk had saved his life, and now he had made good his promise by presenting him with the living of Glenathole.

From that hour the two men remained on terms of the closest friendship, which was only interrupted by the death of his patron some eight years later. But his son had learned to share the father's admiration for Mr. Dunbar's character, and continued to show him the respect and kindness to which he had so good a claim.

After this somewhat romantic introduction to Glenathole, the life of John Dunhar flowed on quietly and uneventfully. He had married one to whom he had been long attached, and who proved herself a helpmate indeed. And when sorrow came, as come it did, and three fair buds faded from the parent stem, that unity of heart which religion alone can effect enabled them to bear

bravely on, looking for the fruition of their hopes in a more congenial clime.

But there came to John Dunbar the darkest day of all, when she who was the "desire of his eyes" passed away from his side, leaving him stricken and desolate. Yet, as if to soften his anguish, a child's voice fell appealingly on his ear, unconsciously claiming the love and pity of that bleeding heart. And, as he traced in its baby features a likeness to her who had died in giving it birth, he elt that the little motherless child was a bond between that mother and himself—a link to bind both himself and it yet closer to the land that knows neither change nor separation.

The boy grew, and, in watching the opening years of his fragile life, the father found consolation for his bereavement; though, with him, consolation did not mean forgetfulness. No; deep down in his heart was a grave over which the flowers of memory blossomed, and which tears of yearning love kept green. As time went on, and the boy became a youth, the father found in him a companion in whom his soul delighted; and advancing years deepened the love that endeared them to each other.

It was a trying hour for both when Raymond was obliged to quit his home to pursue his studies at the university; yet he never failed to return so soon as the sessions closed, bringing each time fresh trophies of academical fame to rejoice his father's heart.

As the old man sits by the fire to-night, his thoughts are all of that son. He is picturing to himself the new, strange life in which he is now mingling; and, as he thinks of all the dangers and snares which beset the path of youth, a cry goes up from his heart to God to protect his innocent boy. Then a great yearning arises in his heart to behold his face again, and clasp him to his breast. He obeys the prompting, and, despite the lateness of the hour, indites with trembling hand a letter urging him to hasten his return. Then, having sealed the letter, he draws towards him the old, well-worn Bible, over which he bends as though its contents were indeed manna to his soul. Closing the sacred page, he kneels in earnest prayer to God, "pouring out his heart" as in the ear of One who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." And he lays himself down to rest, at peace with God, at peace with all the world.

CHAPTER VIII. JESSY'S DILEMMA.

IT was Saturday morning, always the most important morning of the week at the manse, except, of course, Sabbath; and yet here was the minister not in his study till nearly ten o'clock! An irregularity of the kind Peggy scarcely remembered during all her master's previous residence under that roof; for it was his invariable custom to rise at seven and breakfast at eight; nor did he ever keep his housekeeper five minutes beyond the stated time. Today, however, he had failed to make his appearance, and when she, with unutterable forebodings, knocked smartly at his chamber-door, she found that he had actually been asleep until that moment. "Nae wun'er!" commented the venerable domestic to herself; "wha at his time o' life can gang gallivantin' a' ower the countryside without bein' the waur o't? An' a' after a wheen ne'er-dae-weels, wha wad get mair gude o' the jile for sax months than o' his preachin', puir man. But it's nae gude tellin' him, for ministers are jist like doctors-unco laith to pree their ain pheesic."

When at last Mr. Dunbar, with an apprehensive glance at the grim, reproving countenance of his housekeeper, and unmistakable indications on his own of a certain consciousness of guilt, took his place at the breakfast-table, he felt himself bound to account in some way for his unusual divergence from ordinary punctuality, which he attributed to having partaken too freely of supper the night before. But Peggy, as she placed the coffee-pot on the table, promptly undeceived him.

"It's no that ava," she averred; "ye didna tak' as muckle's wad fill a mavis; it's just traikin' aff yer feet after a wheen lazy vaigabonds wha dinna mak' ony banes o' steppin' up to the manse when they want yer siller. I jist turned awa frae the door this vera mornin' that leein' randy, Tib M'Luskie."

"What! that poor widow?" exclaimed Mr. Dunbar in sudden dismay.

"Weedow!" echoed Peggy, indignantly; "she's nae mair a weedow than I'm ane. Naebody but yersel' believes she ever was mairried. Ye wadna believe me when I telt ye she gaed an' spent the last half-croon ye gi'ed her in Tam Wallace's; but gin ye had been as near her the day as I was, ye wad sune hae kent whaur yer next ane wad gang: the hissy was stovin' wi' drink."

"Are you sure of it, Peggy?" asked her master, with sorrowful concern.

"Suir o't?" she retorted; "hae I a nose? I haena won quat o' the smell o't yet, I can tell ye. But it's nae affair o' mine; folk that hae sae muckle siller, that they can fling't awa on a' the riff-raff aboot, dinna need advice anent the keepin' o't. It maks nae odds, ony way; for, as I was sayin' to mysel' afore ye cam' doon, ministers an' doctors hae ane thing in common: they're unco laith to pree their ain pheesic."

With these oracular words, Peggy gave her head a toss, and whisked out of the room, leaving her master to discuss his belated breakfast.

The good man, however, was too much accustomed to these friendly admonitions to allow them to disturb his appetite. •He knew by long experience that his faithful housekeeper would have laid down her life rather than that a hair of his head should be injured; and attributing all her "flyting" to her genuine concern for his welfare, he passively submitted to it. Besides, her sagacity had many a time saved him from imposition on the part of those who sought to traffic in his simple-hearted kindness.

On this morning, however, his own conscience was severely reproving him for having wasted the early freshness of the day in slumber, and he hastily despatched his breakfast, in order to make up for lost time, and plunged headlong into his sermon, which, as yet, had only reached its second head, whereas other three were in contemplation. The leaves of the commentaries flew rapidly under his fingers, and he was deep in the pages of Matthew Henry, when a silvery voice saluted him from behind, and, turning round, he beheld Miss Jessy Douglas.

The very study seemed to brighten with her presence, and the smile on her face as she greeted him banished even the recollection of Matthew Henry. It was not a beautiful face like that of her sister; the features were strongly marked, and far less regular, yet the vivacity that played on it almost counterbalanced the defect. It was a round, chubby face, tanned with the sun, and with a healthy flush of colour in each cheek. The hair and eyes were very dark, like her father's, and, as the former was generally dishevelled, and allowed to float unconfined round her neck and face, while the latter shone with saucy glee, the combined

effect might have recommended her to an artist as a good model for an elf, a mermaid, or any other mischief-working deity.

In form she was slender, though she had now reached that age at which few young women can be termed graceful. There was an elasticity in her step that betokened a light heart, while, at the same time, a certain carelessness and freedom in her gait gave one the impression that she was by no means of a tractable or docile disposition. On this occasion, however, she had rather a subdued air, as if conscious that she was in the presence of one very much better than herself.

"Good morning, Mr. Dunbar," she said, taking the outstretched hand. "I see I am disturbing you. It was thoughtless in me to come to-day, but I——"

"I am glad to see you at any time, Miss Jessy. Pray be seated," said Mr. Dunbar, placing a chair for his visitor. "It is not often, indeed, that I am favoured with visits from my young lady friends. The only one who is at all familiar with the manse is your friend, Miss Errol."

"Oh, yes; I know. Mary was always such a good girl. I never could aspire to being like her. You must not imagine I ever thought of such a thing when I began to go among the poor folks; I merely wanted to help them a little, if I could. You see I always had an interest in them from childhood. I'm sure you must remember what scrapes I used to get into among the village children long ago?"

Mr. Dunbar smiled, and said he did.

"Well, you see, I thought it too bad to turn my back upon them just because I am older," continued Jessy, "and having some spare pocketmoney, and a few other things likely to be of use, I wished to dispose of them. Of course, I never dreamt of preaching to them, because I knew they remembered too many pranks of my own in bygone days to listen to any sermonising from me. I see you are laughing, Mr. Dunbar; I dare say you remember a good many, too."

"None of a very serious nature, I think," replied the minister, rubbing his glasses, and betraying considerable amusement; "certainly none of such a kind as to destroy your influence for good over them now."

"Oh, but I would no more begin to preach to them than mount your pulpit on Sunday," rejoined his companion. "I'm quite sure if I tried it, I would burst out a-laughing in the middle of it. Yes, I would, Mr. Dunbar. I am always most prone, at anyrate, to laugh when I should be sober; it's a weakness of mine, as Mary Errol can tell you. Once I went with her to visit some horrid dirty people in a cottage. The woman had recently lost the third of four children, and only one was left. Mary, to console her, said she had now many ties in heaven, but the woman, far from being consoled by that reflection, replied, 'It'll sune be a' ties thegither,' and although I tried not to do it, I laughed outright. Even Mary herself could hardly keep her countenance, but she told me afterwards she would never take me with her again on a similar visit."

Mr. Dunbar could not forbear laughing at this narrative, and a few minutes elapsed before he was sufficiently sober to ask what was the nature of the trouble on which she had come to consult him.

This question had the immediate effect of restoring Jessy to seriousness. She seemed, however, to have difficulty in making the communication, for she tossed back her hair nervously, described invisible figures with her foot on the carpet, and began to pout her red lips, as if it were of a very disagreeable character.

Mr. Dunbar, noting her embarrassment, said by way of encouraging her to proceed,—

"The Bruces have been trying to take advantage of you, it seems."

"Yes; the ungrateful wretches! I wish I had never gone near them," indignantly replied Miss Jessy. "Who would have thought there were such mean characters in the world?"

The old minister's benign countenance looked very tenderly on the honest impetuous girl before him

"My dear Miss Jessy," he said, with a compassionate smile, "sin has made sad havoc among us; it is only as we grow older that we fully realise to what extent it has defaced God's image, But tell me, if you please, what offence the Bruces have committed against you?"

He looked involuntarily toward his unfinished manuscript, and his visitor, rightly interpreting the look, made haste to deliver her communication.

"You know," she began, "when first I visited the Bruces, I found them all at loggerheads. The eldest daughter had married against the wishes of the family, and her husband, an idle ne'er-do-weel,

was loafing about the house. It was the most pitiable state of things you ever saw. They fought, and swore, and made the house a perfect Bedlam. Well, to prevent further mishaps, which certainly would have occurred, I proposed that the married daughter should live in a home of her own. I took a cottage for them at my own expense, of course, and paid the first year's rent; and, as an acknowledgment, I suppose, of this, the woman called her child afterme. This kindness I tried to return by giving a few trifles to the child; and all seemed doing well, when the woman's husband suddenly disappeared, as, of course, you knew at the time, though no clue has been got as to where he went. Now, what do you think the family have had the effrontery to do? They refuse to move a finger to help the deserted wife, because she married against their wishes. That is bad enough; but the worst is, they say that since I took the responsibility of removing the woman from their house, I am bound to continue to support both her and her child -a thing which I am quite unable to do. Even the money I gave them for the rent has disappeared with the defaulting husband. I told them the thing was preposterous, but they threaten to compel me by law. I would have told papa about it, only I thought that, having begun this sort of work without his knowledge, it would be too bad to trouble him about it when I had got into difficulties. Besides, I knew they would all laugh at me." (Here she blushed, perceiving a smile flicker on her listener's face.) "So, you see, I have come to you for advice, Mr. Dunbar, knowing you would not betray my confidence."

"I fear I have already unwittingly betrayed it," returned Mr. Dunbar; "but to one in whom you may safely rely—Miss Errol. I am sorry if I have caused you uneasiness by so doing."

"Oh, it doesn't matter; I can trust Mary, as you say, though I am sure she will laugh at me."

"She is too generous for that. But in regard to the absurd demands of the Bruces, I think you may set your mind at rest. None but people of their desperate character would have dared to run such a risk of being banished from the place altogether. Considerate as your father is, he would certainly resent such an insult to you. Leave the matter to me, Miss Jessy, and I will satisfactorily dispose of demands of so outrageous a kind. I have already had dealings with that family, so am prepared to

deal with them now. They are suspected of complicity in the smuggling that still goes on here; indeed the man, Dalzell, is believed to have joined a contraband vessel that was seen off the coast just at that time. So they are not likely to hazard a lawsuit against you."

A pleasant smile accompanied the words, a smile so full of calm assurance, that Jessy's misgivings at of ea forsook her, and she returned it with one of grateful thanks as she rose to depart, and extended her dainty little hand to her kind adviser.

"By-the-bye!" she exclaimed, turning round on the threshold, as the recollection suddenly occurred to her, "talking of smuggling, did you hear these reports about the light at Hardy's cottage on the cliff?"

"Yes; reports of that kind are sure to reach my ears," was the answer; "but I hardly know whether to credit them or not. It saddens me to think that anyone within my reach should be guilty of participation in so nefarious a trade."

"Harry says he once saw a suspiciously bright light shining from Hardy's cottage when he was riding home by the shore from Lynnburgh. He told Mr. Kenneth Errol about it, thinking he ought to know, as he was interested in the matter; but Mr. Errol said there was nothing suspicious about the light; that his friend Mr. Lesly could vouch for the honesty of the people at the cliff. Do you think they could have anything to do with the smuggling?"

"I cannot say," replied Mr. Dunbar, shaking his head dubiously; "they are people I have never managed to reach; they always seemed anxious to avoid me. But certainly the practice is still continued, whoever the agents are."

"There is Mr. Lesly walking on to the customhouse at this moment!" exclaimed Jessy, as the individual in question then appeared on the road. "He will pass this way. If I knew him better, I should be curious enough to ask him what he thinks. Shall you ask him, Mr. Dunbar?"

"I think not, Miss Jessy," he answered; and as Mr. Lesly passed, Jessy noticed that the minister's bow was much more distant and formal than it was wont to be. She turned to him, after the gentleman was out of earshot, and said with one of her mischievous smiles,—

"Now, Mr. Dunbar, I am sure you don't like Mr. Lesly; I read it in your face just now when you bowed to him."

"My dear young lady, you fly to conclusions too rapidly," he rejoined; "but I will not attempt to deceive you. I do not like Mr. Lesly, I hardly know why."

"Well, that is strange! Mary Errol says exactly the same thing. Why is it? He has very agreeable manners, and most people are very fond of him, especially Mr. Kenneth Errol."

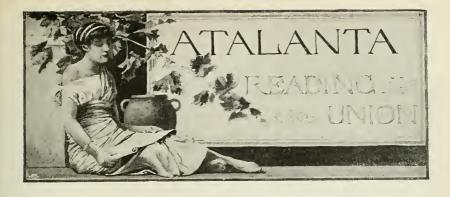
"We cannot account for these things," responded the old man. "I sometimes wonder if there is in truth an instinct akin to that which leads the cow to avoid the toadstool and choose the mushroom, both so much alike in outward appearance."

"What an odd idea!" cried Jessy, bursting into a merry peal of laughter. "To compare Mr. Lesly to a toadstool! Who would ever have thought you would apply such an ugly name to a person you don't like, Mr. Dunbar? Oh, fie! I don't know how I can ever listen to another sermon from you again."

The good man saw that he had entrapped himself, but it was impossible to help joining in Jessy's laugh, even though at his own expense. As she tripped down the path, and then smilingly waved him adieu from the gate, he followed her with his eyes, wishing he had had such a daughter. So bright she was, so engaging in her playful, winsome ways, and so fearlessly honest in all she did or said, that no one could resist her charm. There was something attractive even in her bursts of indignation, and something tenfold more attractive in the ingenuous frankness with which she expressed contrition for any unmerited display of anger. All these different phases of her character Mr. Dunbar had studied from her childhood, and somehow the faults hardly seemed faults in his eyes; in fact, they only enhanced the virtues. No wonder he allowed a sigh to escape his lips as she vanished down the road, and he re-entered his silent home.

The sermon progressed but slowly that day. Wise Matthew Henry appeared to speak almost in an unknown tongue. Several times, in fact, he caught himself dreaming of very irrelevant subjects, chief among which was his absent son. Long after old Peggy had administered her parting injunction to "gang awa to bed like daicent folk," he sat before his desk, busy with the conclusion of his argument in "head number five."

(To be continued.)



THE USE OF DIALECT IN FICTION.

By F. H. TRENCH.

NOTABLE feature in modern novels is the development of the use of dialect. Burns and Scott no doubt first accustomed English eyes to Scotch in print. Dickens-although perhaps careless as to the Yarmouth dialect in "David Copperfield "-caught a phase of cockneyism which is vanishing fast. (How seldom now, save in the recesses of Surrey, "w" is sounded like "v"!) Bret Harte, Miss Wilkins, Lowell, represent for us the rough speech of Californians, Tennessee Mountaineers, or New Englanders; and now we have arrived at the minute fidelity with which Mr. J. M. Barrie reproduces the language of Thrums; delightful also in Mr. Stevenson's Tale of Tod Lapraik in "Catriona." It is not necessary to remind ourselves of the classic beauty with which the poetry of William Barnes has informed the dialect of an English shire. The movement is obvious, and self-conscious, everywhere. languages are even being revived not merely to interpret the peasant, but for their own beauty; as, for instance, Aubanel, and Frederic Mistral in his "Mireio" have revived in letters the langue d'oc. Look closely, and you will perceive a growing and distinct "national" literature in many Swiss Cantons-be it German, Romanch or Ladin; and a "national" literature is coming into existence which is peculiar to the Canton de Vaud,

Now it is usually said that this strong tendency to the use of dialect in fiction is but another phase of what is called Realism, the attempt to make a literal copy of the fact supply the place of imagination. "These devices," such a critic says, "are like onion in a salad. When used by a cunning artist it gives zest to the mixture; when used by a clumsy one, it makes it uneatable." This is true enough, but, as the point is a delicate one, it may not be uninteresting to attempt to discover, by a simple analysis, why and how far such a critic would be right.

I.

Now what is a dialect? It is usually the trace of a vanished language. (We may distinguish it from a patois by noting that a patois is a mixture of dialects, differing in their grammatical constructions, and usually having no joint literature.) In Gaul, as everybody knows, the popular Latin spoken by the folk, under the impact of successive barbaric invasions, took shape in the two principal idioms of the Romanic, namely, the langue d'oil of the northern and central France, and the langue d'oc of the south. As written speech, the langue d'oil prevailed over the other. But dialects or variations of the main stock abounded within the langue d'oil Burgundian, for instance (from which Vaudois is descended), Picard, Norman, and, moreover, the dialect of the Ile de France. This last, in the fourteenth century, acquired, owing to the political ascendancy of the House of Valois, a literary ascendancy over the rest. The Ile de France dialect became first the official, and then the classic, language of the French races. The Picard, Norman, and Burgundian had, therefore, to write like the men of *Ile de France*; but, after centuries of independence, they could not speak like them. What we call provincial accent, in fact, is the attempt of people who have lost their own tongue to speak another.

II.

Our next interesting question is: How far is the novelist wise in attempting to render provincial dialect?

Let us first distinguish its elements. Provincial speech differs from the established type in pronunciation, intonation, pace, and, to a certain extent, in vocabulary. Local words are required for peculiar and local things. The Vaudois require a name for the wicker ark with taper waist, used to carry mountain loads, the Breton one for his rough sea nets, the Gascon another for the hot south wind of his country. Then, the pace is different, for the pace of speech seems to depend on frequency of contact with society. The words of the peasant move slowly as his solitary plough; that of the street arab or factory-hand whisks, head-overheels, along in wheeling somersaults. Intonation and the modulation and inflexion of sentences, so utterly different in a Kerry, a Kentish, or a Kentucky girl, are probably due to climatic difference in the qualities of the air, affecting the larynx. But the chief characteristic, a different pronunciation, or utterance, of words taken separately, is no doubt chiefly due to the original tribal variation indicated above. The strangeness is the trace of a vanished language.

Now the novelist cannot well indicate the pace of speech. He will leave that therefore to the actor. Nor can he well imitate the hundreds of fine inflections of intonation. An eminent tragedian said there were three hundred different ways of saying "Yes." He meant differences due to meaning, and probably there are as many differences which are due to dialect. The wise novelist will therefore leave them to our eminent tragedian, who can show them much better. But as to pronunciation, the novelist now tries to render it by a flood of phonetic spelling. How far should the same rule counsel him to discard it? The answer will depend on the aim of the novelist. Speaking roughly, if he wishes to be a classic, an intellectual landmark in letters, he

should be sparing in the use of this facile device of realism. But if he wishes to please his own generation he will certainly, in measure, retain it. Certain rapid and telling effects can be obtained

by spelling words exactly as they are pronounced. It increases for the contemporary reader the realism of the situation, as in the typical musichall song. It is an appeal to facts and conditions with which he is newly familiar; it is a tacit compliment to his intelligence. It is an easily grasped, an added, verisimilitude; but, it may be said that it secures pungency at the cost of permanencelike a dig in the ribs, which may provoke a smile - but will scarcely induce continuous cheerfulness. It may be said that it is a vicious medium, securing immediate and piquant effect of interest and freshness, but that for posterity it will disfigure and detract from a book's intelligibility, or at least from the ease with which it will be read. Shakespeare, however, is not afraid of using it in limited quantities. If you are bored with Fluellen (Llewellyn), you must admit that his dialect is part of the broad fun of the scene. Moreover, a writer ambitious of rank among the classics can do as Shakespeare has not unfrequently done. He can indicate dialect without grotesque mis-spellings. Seldom spake clowns like Shakespeare's clowns; never spake mechanics like the mechanics of "Midsummer Night's Dream." But why their whimsicality? The fact is, that their rustic idiom is not truly reproduced, but denoted. It is denoted by a quaintness of idea and phrase which stands in its stead.

As to the last element of dialect, namely vocabulary, it is clear that as much should be retained as possible. Local names are often of singular beauty and force, nor can English be too rich in words, which, by a distinct and delicate appropriation, may be retained to shelter in ancient forms the ever multiplying shades of new significances. Thus far our conclusion is that a writer deserves well of English literature, and retains his claim to be a classic, who discards any attempt to render those parts of dialect which consist in pace, accent, and inflexion, who sparingly avails himself of phonetic pronunciation, but who preserves vocabulary.

III.

Nevertheless, far be it from us to wish dialect away. We have examined certain limits to its use, but we thank our stars that its place in fiction is larger, and believe that it will endure. And to our last interesting question—why this should be so the answer is manifold and simple withal. It may be summed in a word. There is a growing interest in the "natural man," that is, an interest in man nearer nature, and in simpler stages of civilization than our own. We like to try to understand, through their familiar speech, the intimate relations of peasant and artisan, and to recognise our own complex experiences in a simpler form. We have learned that the lives of peasants are as interesting and, perhaps, as momentous in their way as those of prime ministers, and a deal fresher. This freshness, or distance from what is to ourselves commonplace, is an essential advantage in artalthough it may be obtained by remoteness in time, space, or social conditions; or through the spectacle of passions stronger than our own. And again, in studying peasant life we feel something of a sanative country air; we watch men still in conflict with the primitive forces from which we are so sheltered, and, neglecting the old finished pastorals of pleasure, feel as we read the reigning pastorals of pain, something of self-approval, in that extension of our imaginative sympathieswhich is indeed art's highest function.

Something, it may be admitted, of our increased interest in dialects is semi-philological and scientific, an interest in the belated pools of the ebb-tide of language, examining even the *patois*, the moving frontier line along which streams continually mingle. For dialects exhibit languages as well as men, at imperfect stages of growth, and we are learning that they may be as interesting in the green leaf, as in the flower of their classical finality.

Something, again, of our interest in dialect is due to that tendency which in politics is called decentralisation. The central, or classic, forces of literature seek to renew themselves by contact with freshness and sincerity; and the provinces seek self-expression. It is a mark of reaction and reversion on the one side—a sign that the national literature has attained maturity. Its finished artists in words, sick of formal perfection, turn to a wild and refreshing paganism; as the greatest lovers of children are ever the middle-aged. They turn to those who speak with accidental genius, the sower and reaper, dealing with great issues in words simple as they are profound.

Moreover, dialect has the pathos of things we watch slipping away. When man learns to think of himself as part of the vast modern state, as a member of humanity, he tends to pre-occupy himself with what is common to all, rather than with that which is distinctive. And this tendency is a power before which the local is vanishing-dialects, costumes, and the old happy customs. Political forces—the great collectivities; and mental forces, of large generalisations, attract our ideas to paler and wider horizons. Man looks farther afield, he takes longer views of life, and therefore his emotions tend to become shallow as the Norfolk Broads: he tends to lose, among other emotions, the intensity, the poignancy, the reality of that affection for locality, which was (let us remember) once deep as religion.

Hence we welcome this localisation of literature. For man is meant to be a particular. His complex of duties, determined by his particular station and capacities, is definite and unique. His artistic endeavours should be determined by his unique powers, environment, and opportunity; and the wiser artist will often be content to be what he is, where he is, and to write only of what he thoroughly knows. He will forgo, thank heaven, barren possibilities of classic fame, for truth and for feeling. He will be content to render the peculiar spirit, the genius loci, of some little community, to be the laureate of his own village, and the chronicler of his own shire. Unless we love one woman above all others we never know what love is; and unless some locality has passed deep into our nature-penetrated us through and through, as an intimate whole, we shall never know the finer part of the love of Nature. And shall, then, dialect, which is the very language of locality, lose its charm? It appeals to the ancient elemental emotions that nursed us. It stirs and ruffles our beings, become stagnant in cloying comfort. It simplifies again our petty sensations, our ideas, nentralised by their own competing multitude. In dialect we snuff again the salty odour from the tall pines, hear the hollow note rung from the prostrate timber, the roar of the mill-water-know all the place where once we ran about and with new childish senses received the first touches of earth. It will always find our hearts, for it is the language of the simple, of the poor, and of the

THE ATALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

Subject for November—"1s waltzing a rational and seemly pastime?" Papers not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before November 25th. The best paper on either side will be published in the magazine.

READING UNION AND SCHOOL OF FICTION.

Give an estimate of the character of Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*. Write a Sonnet on *Ambition*. The knowledge of her success in a cherished project is brought to a dying girl: describe the scene. (Members need only enter for one of these subjects. Reply papers not to exceed five hundred words and to be sent in on or before November 25th.)

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (OCTOBER).

Т

Bishop Heber's hymns for Sundays in Advent.

11

Eliza Cook; Thomas Saekville, Lord Buckhurst; Henry Kirke White; Hon. Mrs. Norton.

111.

Annabel Lee, by E. A. Poe; To Contemplation, by H. Kirke White; Northern Farmer, by Lord Tennyson.

TV

Oliver Twist.

V.

To W. Kitchener, M.D., by Thomas Hood.

3.1

1. To the supposed faculty of the hudhud, or lapwing, of discovering water underground.

VII.

1. To the terrible earthquakes which took place in Sicily in 1783. 2. The Task—The Timekeeper, by William Cowper.

SEARCH QUESTIONS (NOVEMBER).

1.

- 1. Where do these lines occur?-
 - "And who are these with Hydra tresses,
 And iron wings that climb the wind,
 Whom the frowning God represses—"
- 2. Name the author.

1.1

- 1. Who wrote these lines?-
- "Oh, mighty mind, in whose deep stream this age Shakes like a reed in the unheeding storm; Why dost thou curb not thine own sacred rage?"
- 2. What character speaks thus?-
 - "Dear Earth, I do sainte thee with my hand, Thongh rebels wound thee with their horses' hoofs. As a long-parted mother with her child Plays fondly with her tears and smiles in meeting; So weeping, smiling, greet I thee, my Earth, And do thee favour with my royal hand?"

HI.

1. Who was the author of a pamphlet called "The Cabinet Conneil"? and 2, "A Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth"?

IV.

- 1. By whom were these lines written ?-
 - "No marble marks thy couch of lowly sleep, But living statues there are seen to weep; Affliction's semblance bends not o'er thy tomb, Affliction's self deplores thy early doom."
- 2. Of whom?

V.

1. Whom did Pope style "the fairest of critics"?

VI.

- 1. By whom was this epigram written?-
 - "You are so witty, profligate, and thin, At once we think thee Milton, Death, and Sin."
- 2. To whom does it refer?

VII.

- 1. To whom is attributed the praise of having revived a taste in Tuscan literature?
 - 2. Who wrote these lines?-
 - "So gentle, yet so brisk, so wondrous sweet, So fit to prattle at a lady's feet."
 - 3. To whom does this description refer?-
- "A short, slight, pretty figure, a quantity of golden hair, a pair of blue eyes that met his own with an inquiring look, and a forehead with a singular capacity (remembering how smooth and young it was), of lifting and knitting itself into an expression that was not quite one of perplexity, or wonder, or alarm, or merely of a bright fixed attention, though it included all the four expressions."
 - 4. Give author and work.





AN ORGAN BABY.

By John Strange Winter,

Author of "Bootles' Baby," "Houp-La," "A Golden Silence," "Yum-Yum: A Pug," "Mignon's Secret," "Mignon's Husband," "A Soldier's Children," Sec., Sec.

WAS very busy painting my great picture, the one which was to make the hit of the season and a name for me, so that all the world should stand and gape open-mouthed upon me and wonder how so young a man had been able so completely to master the details and technique of his art as I had done. We painters all have these dreams, wild and impracticable as they are. They do not often come true, and those who have dreamed them not unfrequently find themselves teaching the rudiments of their craft, making frames for more fortunate, if less gifted, workers to put their works in, or in painting cheap signs and pictures at so much, or more truly, so little a score; and the dreams are vanished never to return again for ever. Yet we would not, any of us, I think, be without our dreams; oh, no, life without dreams and without romance would be too terrible a reality, too awful a tragedy for human nature to grind through to the bitter end.

I was afterwards one of the lucky ones in this particular race. I made a hit, but it was not with that picture—that, indeed, was destined never to be finished. It stands now at the back of a pile of old canvases in my studio, pushed right out of sight behind a smart Japanese screen, for which I gave five-and-thirty guineas last year. Yes, and I told myself, and everyone else, that it was cheap. Cheap! at five-and-thirty guineas, a sum which, when I began that never-to-be-finished picture, I regarded in the light of an income. Ah, well, well, it only shows how easily we weak mortals can get used to luxury and the good things of this life.

However, my story is to tell how it happened that I got myself into a condition of finances to be able to pay five-and-thirty guineas for a single article of ornamental furniture. I did it by making a big hit—at the Academy, of course. But as the picture of my dreams was never finished, I did not do it through that. Well, yes I did, in an indirect way—for it was through the unfinished picture that the idea for "The Organ Baby" came to me. And it was "The Organ Baby" that won recogni-

tion for me and gave me the honour of a barrier, and would have given me three dinners' for every day, if I could have eaten them. And I came to think of "The Organ Baby" in this way.

I had in my mind a street scene, to be called "The Opera-House of the Poor." A dingy and squalid court was to be the background, and an Italian organ-grinder playing to a crowd of gutter children, two of whom were dancing with skirts upheld in one hand, while the other was curved above the head in true ballet style. For the scenery I went to nature, or, if not to nature, at least to the handiwork of man; that is, to a regular slum. For the organ-grinder I meant to get an old Italian model. who had sat for me many times already. The children were easy enough-children in artistic circles may be found as plentifully as blackberries upon bramble bushes in September. The only doubtful point was the piano-organ, of whose details I was not sure, and for which I was afraid to trust my memory. So, though I was as hard up as any young painter ever was in this world, what among ourselves we call "stony-broke," I went foraging around till I found an old piano-organ in a more or less bad state of repair, and I bought it for a sovereign. It was the best laid-out sovereign I ever spent in my life.

There was nothing very wonderful about my studio. It was bare and gaunt-looking, and it was comfortless, too. I slept in a little room which opened out of it, and I did for myself. The times would not run to the expense of a studio boy. But whatever fault it had, it was roomy, not to say palatial, in point of size. I never could tell how I came to get it so cheap, and when I brought that great lumbering piano-organ in, and settled it down in one corner, it did not seem at all out of place, and, indeed, it quite helped to give that side of the great, bare room a furnished look. I was hard at work on "The Opera-House of the Poor" when I acquired the piano-organ, so that I was glad to study it and find out its points as soon as possible. I began with a rough study of the affair by itself. I have always believed in working up the different points of a picture steadily, so that every part shall be good in itself. And this was what I did when that piano-organ first came into my possession.

And, somehow or other, I could not for the life of me get the right hang of the thing. I tried and tried again and again, but the real spirit of the ramshackle old concern would not come to me, try and try as I might. It was but a shabby affair, and would only play about one note out of three, and even they went with a whirr and a creak, as if the previous winter's frost had got into its joints and had given it the rheumatism. It had a gailypainted front, very gandy and vile, from an artist's point of view, but which suited its general hideousness all the same. A frightful old cover of faded green baize I had turned back, and this disclosed a pathetic little cradle nailed across the handles, for the sake of which I had become the owner of it. I had seen babies over and over again in such little resting-places, and, somehow, I had always imagined that they had rather a good time of it than otherwise. I had thought that such cradles were padded and cushioned like a small bed, and that the little human creature inside of each was kept warm and cosy, while its parents stood about wet as to the feet, red as to the nose, and chilled to the very bones. I had always imagined that these organ babies really enjoyed the sound of the tunes played by the piano-organ, thinking that Mascagni's "Intermezzo," and such fetching airs as "Oh, Mr. Porter," and "Daisy, Daisy," would tend to give pleasant slumbers and make an ever-changing lullaby, so that an organ baby invariably got the best of it.

Well, I worried and worried over that brute of an organ until I went almost near to taking a hammer and smashing the whole concern to pieces. But one afternoon when I had been working all day, and had, in fact, worked myself into a regular fever, I determined towait till the next day, and see if morning light would not help me out with the most contrary bit of work that had ever fallen to my lot. I was tired out, and no mistake about it. I put down my brushes and filled my pipe afresh, and then I sat down in the one really easy chair that I possessed, to think it out over again.

You see a picture wants a lot of thinking out, take it from first to last. It is only in story-books that a fellow takes it into his head that he would like to paint pictures, and in about three weeks is

made President of the Royal Academy. It doesn't come out so in real life, not a bit of it. No, you have got to think and think, and to stay slogging for days or weeks till you get your idea ship-shape, and then you've all the work to do, and the least humbugging about may spoil the whole thing. No, it is not easy to paint a picture—a picture that will be looked at by men who know what a picture is. Take my word for it.

So I sat down in the gathering dusk to have a big think over it once more. What happened next I am not quite sure of, but I either went to sleep or I got transferred to another person—anyway, I somehow found myself in a scene that I had never known before in all my life. I was quite conscious that I was still Hamish Maclaren, the young Scot, who meant to get the better of fortune sooner or later—and yet it did not seem to be me atall. Where was I? what had become of me? I was surely very small, very tight, and very uncomfortable, and in a place that stank of uncooked onions. Or stay—was it a smell of onions? No, for I knew the odour quite well, and had smelt it in Italy many and many a time—it was garlic.

I could not speak. I was perfectly helpless to do more than kick my arms and legs about, and to turn my head feebly from side to side. As far as I could tell I was in a small, dirty, smoky cottage in Italy, and by the dress of the three persons who were there, I knew that I was not in any town. Probably I was in some remote village among the poorest peasantry. There was a fire of wood burning on the hearth, and a large black pot hanging above it. A very old woman-she might have been ninety by her looks-sat near to it, and every now and again she lifted the lid and stirred the contents with a long stick or wooden spoon. A man with a rough black beard, and a shock head of black hair, was carving something on the opposite side of the fire, and a hard-featured young woman squatted down, apparently making some preparation for supper. "And you've quite made up your mind?" she remarked to the man.

"Quite. It is the only thing we can do. It won't last long—we shall gather lots of money from these fools of English who think all music that comes from Italy must be good—we shall save; and then we can come back in triumph and live on it for the rest of our lives. Was ever a better prospect, Margherita?"

They spoke in Italian, and in a patois which, as Hamish Maclaren, I did not recognise, but which yet sounded perfectly familiar to me. The woman did not immediately answer, but she looked at the old woman who, being stone deaf, did not take the smallest notice of anything that went on around her. She turned her great black eyes, too, on the little dingy room and, as they travelled, they fell upon me in my cradle. "And the babe?" she asked, briefly.

The man uttered an exclamation of impatience. "I suppose we could not leave her with the grandmother?" he returned, a little blankly.

"And she so deaf!" ejaculated the woman, reproachfully. "Besides, she would never be troubled with a babe of four months old like Camille," she said.

She spoke moodily, and stopped in her occupation of peeling vegetables. So I was a babe of four months old, I thought; and a little girl-babe, too—I, Hamish Maclaren. Well might I feel so queer!

"To put her out to nurse would cost a fortune," said the man, with decision. "It is out of the question since we go to make money, not to spend it. It would be cheapest to take her with us, and those English are great fools, they will give more, they say, if there is a babe to show."

So I, a girl-babe of but four months old, was to be taken to England in order to squeeze a little more money out of the pockets of the English people.

"I shall have to carry her always—and she grows heavy," put in Margherita, sullenly.

"Beppo told me that they had a piano-organ which had a little cradle fit for a princess at one end of it," exclaimed the man, eagerly.

"Could we get the same?" she asked.

"And why not? You go to the Maestro and you hire what organ you please. We will only have one with a cradle. Think of it. Beppo brought back no less than two thousand lire. It is a patrimony."

So I was a little Italian girl-baby, and I was to spend the next few months in the cradle of a pianoorgan! Well, fate in this world is a strange thing. There is no gainsaying it.

I did not, although I was quite conscious of my other existence as Hamish Maclaren, find my circumstances change at all. I still remained bound fast in the person of four-months-old Camille Leonardo. I still remained a denizen of that little Italian house, and the fleas and other small deer played their wicked will upon me, and I was still nurtured in the usual way. I don't believe my mother-for, of course, Margherita was my mother -cared a half-farthing for me; no, I really do not. All the affection she possessed was given to the black-bearded Rafael, her husband. He was filthy and brutal and foul of tongue, and he used her shamefully, and yet she worshipped him. In his way he liked her too, but not so much. No, but oddly enough, he loved me better than she did, and he kept taking me up in his arms and fondling me with always that horrible smell of garlic about him-and I with still 'my Hamish Maclaren fastidiousness fully developed. Ugh, it was horrible.

And, at last, we started for England. travelled third class, in company which made me continually sick, so that Margherita used to threaten me with all sorts of pains and penalties if I were not "good," and she, each time, attended to me so carelessly that my poor little garments were soon worse by far than the garlic of which Rafael stank so abominably. Part of the way we walked. or they did, for they had not enough money to go the whole way by train. And, at last, we came to the sea and embarked on board of a steamboat, and I suffered worse than ever. As Hamish Maclaren I had never known sea-sickness, but as Camille Leonardo I suffered the tortures of the martyrs. And Camille was left to her helpless fate, for Margherita lay like a useless log from the start till we reached London, and never attempted to relieve me or to do anything to help me in any way. Oh, how all wretched I was. How the Hamish Maclaren side of my mind longed and prayed for death during all the terrible hours of that black and hideous night. But I did not die. No, the hardy Scot's nature, or the healthy peasant blood, held out, and when I was able to notice anything else, I was in Margherita's arms in dear old familiar London, though it was that part of it which no one would, in the ordinary course of events, hanker after. I was chilled to the bones, stiff with cold, gasping from the fog, and feeling empty and hungry. At last, after a long tramp, we entered an evil-smelling den, and Rafael called for some hot wine and for some meat. It was whisky that he brought-the dirty waiter, I meanfor as he told Rafael in fluent Italian, whisky was

the best drink for this diabolical climate, and would help, as nothing else would, to keep the damp and cold out of their bones. Margherita gulped and coughed at first, but she took to it very kindly. I was longing that she would offer me a drink of it so that I, too, might feel the warming sensation creeping all over me. She did not seem to think of it, at least not until she had disposed of more than half the contents of her glass. Then she suddenly remembered me and held the glass to my lips. I really thought for a moment that she had killed me. I coughed, and choked, and gulped, and Margherita set me up and slapped me hard on the back, which made me worse and did not help me at all.

Still, I must confess that when I had recovered myself a little, I felt all the better for that awful draught of coarse, raw-tasting, cheap whisky. In fact, I know that it saved my life for the time being.

Two days later, Rafael and Margherita went and interviewed the Maestro who owned the piano-organs, which are let out to those who wish to earn a living in that way. Rafael had brought a message from his friend Beppo, and the Maestro, who gave Beppo a very good name, was very much more civil in consequence. "I can by the merest chance let you have the very organ that Beppo Visconti had when he was in this country," he said. "It has been out since he had it, but it came in a month ago, and has been under repair. The two newest tunes have been added, and it is now an organ of the very first-class. In an ordinary way I should not let it out to a newcomer but, as you are a friend of Beppo's, I will let you have it on the same terms as he had. I shall be out of pocket," he added, by way of comment.

Whereupon Rafael and Margherita, who did not in the least care whether the Maestro was out of pocket or not, looked the concern carefully over, noted the cradle at the end of it, and paid their deposit-money. Finally, with a little good advice from the Maestro, they left, and I was at once delegated to the little box which was nailed across the handles.

It was a change for the worse; distinctly for the worse. It was very damp, and was nothing more than a shallow wooden box, covered with motheaten green baize. The covering was a piece of

old tarpaulin, and the little pillow was as musty and damp as the ground on a sodden November day.

But all that was as nothing compared with what followed. They were anxious not to lose a single day in beginning to make their fortune, so instead of going home they chose a likely-looking street and began operations. Such a jump as I gave when that fearful thing began playing close by my ear. I wonder that I did not fall out over the side, and so put an end to my poor little bruised and frozen body on the stones of the street. It was as if ten thousand fiends had all got loose in that one square box. It was as if they were all trying which could throttle the others and get the mastery. I could not recognise a single tune, all was alike-one confused and hideous discord. I believe in the end that I fainted. I had never fainted in all my life as Hamish Maclaren, but certain it is that, when the grinding had been going on for some long time, when we had stopped and played right through the repertoire, and had gone on further and played again, and so on for several hours, I suddenly knew no more about it. I must have fainted.

When I came to myself I was in Margherita's arms, and, although my poor little head was going round and round, spinning like a boy's top, and my little limbs felt chilled and sore from the jolting in the hard and unyielding cradle, I yet was thankful to take my food, and grateful for the respite from the torture I had already endured.

As soon as I was fed, Margherita resolutely put me back again. "She must learn to go in her cradle," she said, when I expressed my disgust in the only mode at my command. "If once she gets used to being carried everywhere, there will be no bearing with her," said she, in reply to Rafael's remonstrance.

But as I still continued to wail, he bade her turn the handle while he nursed me a while. "It will never do to have the child crying," he said. "These English are absurdly fond of their children, and a baby will fetch money when nothing else will."

So Rafael carried me and Margherita turned the handle. And when the end of that day came, and they counted up their gains, they found that they had taken eighteen shillings and a few pence. And I had suffered a perfect martyrdom—all for the sake of eighteen shillings and a few pence. Nay, for

less than that, for the cost of the organ was five shillings a day, and, of course, that had to be taken off the sum which they had actually received.

Somehow, I could not get used either to the cradle or the noise. And whenever I was put into it, I was so terrified that the fiends inside would begin their horrid pandemonium, that I immediately gave vent to my feelings in a prolonged yell of anger and dismay. Nor was Margherita able to break me of it. In vain did she slap me and pinch me—I but yelled the louder. Still she persevered and never once gave way to my evident desires. Rafael sometimes did, if I yelled loudly enough—Margherita, never.

So time went by, one hideous tortured day succeeded another, each more horrible and full of anguish than the one which had gone before. My poor little baby's head did not in the least get used to the din of the hammers or the whirr of the grinding wheels. My poor little, nervous, tender body got no better used to the hard cradle in which I was made to lie, though as I grew weaker I was able to remonstrate less and less, and they took my comparative silence for acquiescence, than which a greater mistake was never made. The days wore into weeks, the weeks into months, and still my infant martyrdom dragged its slow and weary course along. Tried as I had been by the fierce frosts of winter, and almost choked as I had been by the impenetrable fogs, all these were as nothing compared with the keen blasts of what in England they call the spring. I suffered-dear Heaven, no one on earth ever knew how much. I was so chilled and so frozen-so nipped-so congealed, that I became almost inanimate, and even Margherita called me "good." But there was not much goodness about me, poor little shivering blue-tinged atom of humanity that I was. I was only just about as good

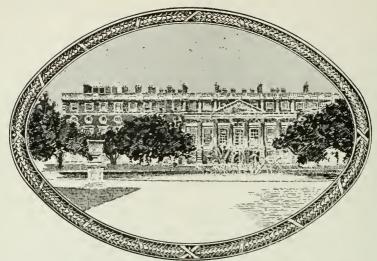
as a cupful of water impregnated with cholera germs, which has been frozen into a square block of ice.

And the more I suffered, the more money Rafael and Margherita made. Ladies, dressed from top to toe in the richest velvets and furs, would stand for a moment and say—"Oh, poor things, how cold they must be. And a dear little baby, too. Well, I hate street organs, but I must give them a penny for the baby's sake. There, that is all I have. Give it to the mother for the baby, darling." And then the well-fed little English girl or boy would come toddling to the edge of the pavement and give Margherita the coppers; and both would go on their way flushed with the consciousness of having done a kindly action. What a mockery it all was.

And poor little Camille still suffered-suffered. And at last there came a more biting east wind than those which had gone before, so that people scurried along, holding themselves together as it were, and Rafael and Margherita grinned more mechanically than ever. And poor little Camille began to gasp for breath-yes, to gasp and wheeze, and then to choke-and at last a still little body lay in the cradle on the handles of the piano-organ, and I, Hamish Maclaren, came to my own person again just in time to see a pair of low-class Italian people counting up their gains-to hear the man say-" Per Baccho, Margherita, that makes two thousand lire." And to see a pale little spirit hovering for a moment, with a look of pathetic reproach in its sad eyes, over what had once been its living tenement.

Did I wake? I do not know. But I painted my picture, "An Organ Baby," and it was the picture of its year at the Academy. So there the old piano-organ stands in one corner of my studio, a sacred thing.





FIVE O'CLOCK. TEA. AT. HAMPTON. COVRT.

By Mrs. Barkley.

In the summer weather there is nothing much more pleasant than to spend a week or so at Hampton Court Palace. I have just returned from visiting friends there. After the bustle and excitement of a London season, one could not experience a greater contrast than to find one's self sharing the quiet and peaceful life of the residents in this grand old Palace. As you wander through the beautiful parks and gardens, or (if you have friends among the residents) from one suite of apartments to another, you feel as if you were miles away from town, and living in an old and ideal world, and you experience the sensation of complete rest and repose.

One tries to picture the majestic pile of buildings, peopled with gay courtiers, as it was in the days of Henry VIII. and his Court, carriages continually driving in and out, full of gaily dressed ladies and their attendant cavaliers.

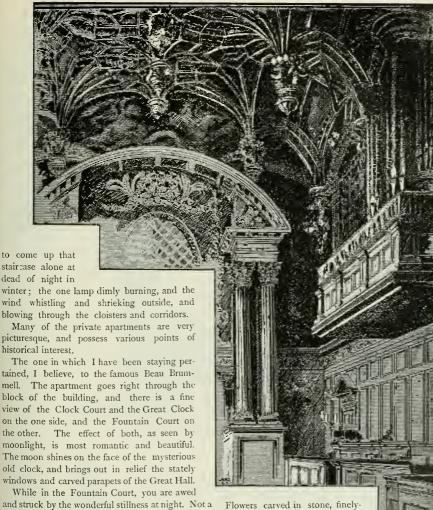
Balls, theatricals, and many a stately pageant, took place in the Great Hall, now used for a very different purpose, as, while the Chapel Royal is closed for repairs, divine service is at the present

time held within its lofty old tapestried walls, formerly the scene of so many gay revels and magnificent banquets. Here the great functions of State were celebrated, and Henry VIII. received the ambassadors; and here, too, Jane Seymour would descend the old oak staircase from her apartment, passing through the finely-carved portals of the "Queen's Gate" and wide oaken doors, to dine, and afterwards dance, with the king.

I am told by those who profess to have witnessed it, that her spirit still glides through the unopened doors, and slowly passes down the staircase in a long white dress, carrying a lighted candle; she makes no sound, but walks quietly down and vanishes in the gloom, towards the small hours of the morning.

This is the most haunted part of the Palace, and is near to the "Haunted Gallery," divided only by the "Queen's Staircase."

My friends live on the old oak staircase, and have a pretty apartment, full of quaint nooks and corners. I must confess, that, although not particularly nervous or superstitious, I should not care



and struck by the wonderful stillness at night. Not a sound falls upon the ear but the striking of the Great Clock, as it slowly chimes the quarters and the hours. Everything here reminds one forcibly of a bygone age. My friends have a fine view of both these Courts from the windows of their rooms, which look right into them.

The carvings in the Fountain Court are very fine.

Flowers carved in stone, finelywrought heads placed at intervals, adorn one side of the Court; and the round windows above the State apartments are especially quaint and picturesque, with small square panes, and

having a very unique and curious design of lions'



skins in stone, draped, as it were, round them.

Even the markings of the skins are plainly shown. The huge lions' paws are at the top, and underneath, the lions' tails formed into a knot.

A great many people pay visits to their friends in the Palace in summer time, and generally arrive in large parties, eager to see everything that there is to be seen, and especially to be shown the "Haunted Rooms," and ask innumerable questions about the royal ghosts of the Palace.

Many creep cautiously about, and apparently expect to see weird shadows appear to them in broad daylight,

Out of one of the rooms in this apartment is a door leading to a winding staircase, formerly connected with a secret passage to the river. This, however, is now blocked up, but the door remains.

My friends here have shown me everything, and pointed out the curious old windows, put in the most unexpected places, very high up, or on one side, as is the case in a tiny boudoir, where the window is built partly into the wall.

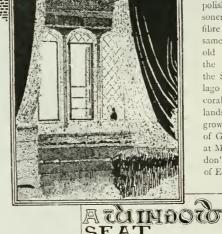
One day, in particular, my hostess had invited

some special friends down from town to five o'clock tea. Having obtained permission from some of her friends among the residents in the Palace to go over their apartments, we were fortunately able to avail ourselves of this very unusual opportunity.

My friends here have travelled much in various parts of the world, and seen many curious places, out of the beaten track. That the lines had not altogether "fallen unto them in pleasant places" we felt, as they described some of their many adventures, dangers, and hardships, while we inspected their little collection of curiosities.

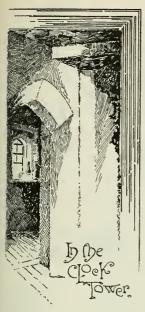
Among them, the gigantic double cocoanut,

or, 'coco de mer," from the Seychelles Islands, polished by native prisoners there; delicate fibre baskets, from the same wonderful tree; old rupees, dug up in the outlying islands in the Seychelles Archipelago; curious shells and corals from the same islands; vanilla pods, grown in the gardens of Government House. at Mahé, General Gordon's supposed Garden of Eden.



We saw also Kaffir curios from Basutoland and the Orange Free State; an ancient powder flask and

pistol belonging to a Basuto warrior, taken in the last Basuto campaign, and brought home by



our hostess. who had been all through the war, on the frontier. A necklace was shown us, formerly worn by a great Basuto chief as a charm against illness and danger, composed of men's fingers, bits of baboons' fingers and goats' horns, and another made of earth-nuts dug up and threaded together, mixed with blue beads, worked into a pattern. They showed

us a large gold coin from South America, valued at four pounds; wings of wildgeese from the Falkland Islands, shot out there, and the whole bird frozen and sent home in a ship full of frozen meat, arriving in good preservation.

We saw also many photographs and sketches of Heligoland, our "Lost Gem," a model of the island made out of the native rock, and various other little treasures from this beautiful island, the "Queen of the North Sea."

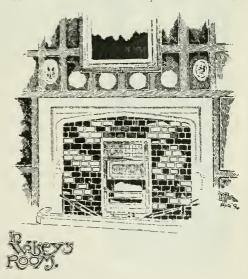
After refreshing ourselves with tea and pleasant chat, we were conducted to see some dungeons belonging to this suite, of which there are several on the ground floor, approached by a small paved court and a Tudor archway. They run under Wolsey's chapel and have grated windows, some of which look into the Clock Court. Prisoners were formerly immured here. A young girl with us was delighted with this place, and begged to be locked in for a little while "just to see how it felt"; but I refused, as I mistrusted the

huge keys, they looked so old and rusty, and the heavy doors would take some time to break open.

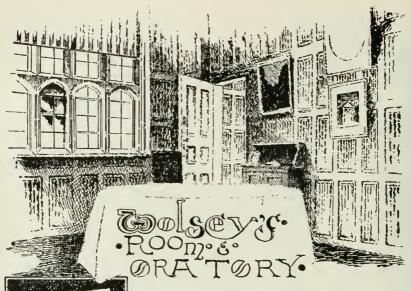
We were then taken by our friends to the Clock Tower, the kindly and gracious occupant of this fine Apartment having given her permission for us to be taken all over it. We gladly availed ourselves of this, and were much interested in all we saw. In this suite are a great many rooms, which are very curious and interesting. It includes almost the whole of the Clock Tower, and the rooms on both sides of the gateway commanding beautiful views of the Wolsey and Clock Courts, with peeps of the distant landscape beyond, and glimpses of the river, now gay with boats of all kinds.

The only entrance is by steep and winding stairs, up high and narrow turreted towers, which flank each side of the building.

The windows are so narrow that large pieces of furniture such as a piano have to be taken to pieces, and brought up to the rooms in bits, as they cannot be carried up the stairs in any other way. Sometimes the mullions of the windows even have to be removed, which causes much trouble, and the furniture, piano, &c., swung down into the court below. We went up one of the narrow



ted the loopholed towers, until we came to the drawing-



room, a fine room, where Wolsey's visitors used to wait for an interview, with windows on both sides looking over the Wolsey and Clock Courts: opening out of this is a small hall, and then we came to the famous "Panelled Room," where Cardinal Wolsey received his visitors. Beyond this is a tiny oratory, the walls of

which are all panelled and carved in the beautiful "folded linen" pattern, an exact representation of a

piece of linen folded. From these reception rooms, we are told, the Cardinal used to go through a Tudor archway to his other and more private rooms, when his audiences were over and business transacted.

The story goes, that one cold night in winter, a gentleman was sitting by the fire in this room, reading a book very comfortably, when lo! to his great astonishment, the candles were suddenly extinguished by an unseen hand, leaving him in utter darkness. There was no wind, and nothing to be seen, but feeling that there was something "uncanny" about it, he took to his heels, and for the future avoided sitting in the "Panelled Room" at midnight.

The winding staircase in the high turreted towers leads straight up past various rooms and corridors to the celebrated great "Clock Room," which is just underneath the famous Astronomical Clock. The whole room is shaken when it strikes the hour, there is so much vibration. This is a very large and lofty room, with splendid views on both sides. There are three entrances to it, two from the turreted towers, and one door, besides, leading out of it, to a curious little room used as a bath-room. While we were looking at it, and exploring the old-

fashioned cupboards, the Great Clock chimed the quarters and then struck the hour, making such a thundering noise that we all wondered how anyone could sleep under it, but were told that they soon became quite accustomed to, and hardly noticed it at all.

This is the supposed birthplace of Edward VI., and we were informed that Jane Seymour died there—but some authorities deny this entirely.

We all went up higher yet to see the huge works

of the clock. It takes half an hour to wind up, and keeps very good time.

Mr. E. Law gives a full and graphic description of the clock itself and its "Great Bell" in his "Complete History of Hampton Court Palace," in which he mentions that this bell is the oldest thing at Hampton Court, older not only than Henry VIII.'s clock, but more ancient than the Cardinal's Palace itself.

We were all highly delighted with this curious and ancientapart-

ment, and went about everywhere finding out quaint nooks and corners.

The next day we managed to persuade one of the authorities to take us on the roof for a few minutes, where we had a splendid view of the river and the surrounding landscape.

After scrambling about on the roof, we all went to see the apartment which formerly belonged to Sir Christopher Wren, the lady who now occupies it having kindly allowed us to go over it.

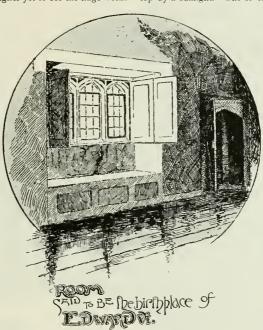
This is a very pretty and curious suite, like the first one which we saw; it runs right through the

Palace from the fountain to the Clock Court in the block of the building, partly underneath the picture galleries. Above are the celebrated Beau Brummell's rooms.

Here we were shown Christopher Wren's studio, looking into Fountain Court, just opposite the fountains, which were playing in the brilliant sunshine. This is a particularly picturesque little room, octagon-shaped, and partly lighted from the top by a sunlight. One of the rooms has such a

remarkably thick wall (especially in one place by the window looking over the colonnade built by Wren) that one feels convinced, as one looks at it, that there must be a secret chamber inside. The wall sounds hollow if you tap it, and there is room enough for several people to take refuge. One longs to explore its mysteries!

Christopher Wren's kitchen is on the same floor as his former studio, a quaint little place, with a Tudor-arched doorway leading into



another room.

Space forbids more than a passing glimpse of some of these hidden historical treasures, which we had the good fortune to be allowed to see, in the private Apartments.

These suites vary very much in size and arrangement, some being very comfortable, compact, and complete in themselves; others large, airy, and altogether quite imposing, but not so convenient. We were taken to see an apartment which was in reality a regular two-storeyed house in the cloisters, on entering which we found ourselves in

a large hall, containing a fine and valuable collection of curiosities brought home from the famous

voyage of HMS Challenger by the late Captain F. Thomson who commanded her.

Trophies of spears, shields, poisoned arrows, &c., of all descriptions, and used by almost every race of savages, are displayed on

the wall. This suite was formerly occupied by Mrs. Tom Sheridan and her three daughters, the famous beauties, Mrs. Norton, the Duchess of Somerset, and Lady Duferin, all equally beautiful and celebrated descendants of the great Sheridan.

All round the Wolsey Court are apartments formerly used by Cardinal Wolsey, either as guest chambers or reception rooms. One which we saw opening into the Colonnade,

and overlooking both the Clock and Wolsey Courts, contains a large and very lofty room, which was probably a dining-room. Another suite opening on to the Colonnade is very fine, having a beautiful old oak staircase in it. Some of the rooms are panelled and carved in the "folded linen" as well as in the "ribbon" pattern, which is very effective.

The two girls and myself were then taken by my hostess to the very top of the Palace, up many

stone steps with handsome iron balustrades of an artistic design, to another storey, consisting of a suite of large, lofty rooms, commanding splendid views of the gardens, Water Gallery, the Home Park and Private Gardens.

The large reception rooms belonged, we were told, to the maids of honour of Queen Mary, wife of William III. They open one into the other, and the largest is called "The Salon of the Maids of Honour." William III. and Mary occupied the State Rooms underneath, and they lived also on the ground floor, from which they had a private

> door, opening on to the gardens. It is well worth while to climb up

the many stairs to this fine suite of rooms; the air is so fresh, and one breathes quite a different atmosphere from that of the apartments below, and as you sit in the deep window-seats, you can enjoy a perfect view and the scent of orange blossoms

from the trees laden with fruit and flowers in the orangery below, while the perfume of roses, heliotrope, mignonette, and many other familiar flowers is wafted towards you.

These rooms are full of Indian curiosities and many other treasures, arranged with great taste and skill.

After much pleasant talk we take our leave, and on descending the staircase, we see various baskets with coloured ribbons, which are let down by the servants, to receive provisions, letters, &c., thus saving unnecessary ascents of the long staircases.

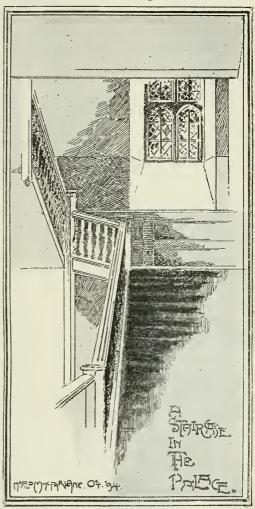
Much to my disappointment, when staying at this Palace, I did not see even a vestige of a ghost, although I slept in the Blue or "Haunted Room," but must own that I certainly heard some weird sounds proceeding from the next room. Something or someone tried my door, knocked several times, and on my opening it there was no one to be seen. Doors carefully locked at night were constantly found open in the morning, and I saw one door slowly shut itself, although there was no wind at all

Once or twice I fancied that footsteps seemed to follow me along the passages, or when I went up the old oak stairs. My hostess tells me that she has heard loud screams at midnight coming from the "Haunted Gallery," which is near to her apartment, supposed to be uttered by the "shrieking ghost," as Mr. Law terms it in his new "Guide to Hampton Court Palace," from which I quote the following passage.

"This old mysterious gallery, the door of which is on the right as you go down the staircase, has its name from being supposed to be haunted by the shrieking

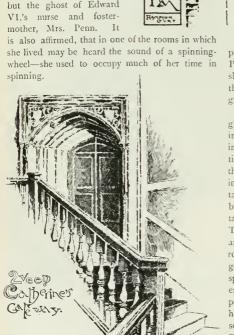
ghost of Queen Katherine Howard. It was here, at any rate, that she escaped from her own chamber in which she was confined before being sent to the Tower, and ran along to seek an interview with Henry VIII., who was hearing mass in

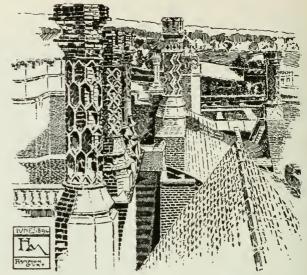
the royal closet in the chapel. Just, however, as she reached the door, the guards seized her and car-



ried her back; and her ruthless husband, in spite of her piercing screams, which were heard almost all over the Palace, continued his devotions unmoved. And in this gallery, it is said, a female form, dressed in white, has been seen coming towards the door of the royal pew, and, just as she reaches it, has been observed to hurry back with disordered garments and a ghastly look of despair, uttering at the same time the most unearthly shrieks, till she passes through the door at the end of the gallery. gallery is now the lumber room for old pictures, and, as the staircase is locked at night, the voice of the 'shrieking queen' is but rarely heard."

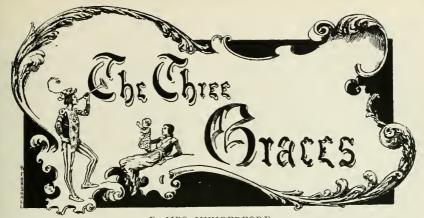
Not only is the spectre of Jane Seymour said to haunt that part of the Palace where I was staying, but the ghost of Edward VI.'s nurse and fostermother, Mrs. Penn. It





Footsteps are also heard here and in different parts of the older portion of the Palace, and Nurse Penn may occasionally be seen at midnight gliding slowly about the long galleries and state rooms of the Palace, her face partially concealed by a large grey hood, and dressed in a long narrow robe.

Within the last two months, no less than three ghosts have been plainly seen in one room, and two in another. A little girl of twelve years, sleeping in the same room, gives a clear and graphic description of a woman in white, who appeared to her in the small hours. This child was awakened by hearing her name called twice, very loudly, but did not take any notice, and lay still. Presently, the room became faintly lighted, and, to her astonishment, a tall figure appeared to glide through the closed door. The figure walked up and down in front of the child, and looked at her, went to the other end of the room, stood still, and then, still gazing, began to gesticulate, and, raising her hand, commenced a long speech with these strange words:-"Behold the enemy cometh, prepare the way of escape." At this point the little girl became so terrified that she hid her face in the bedclothes and stopped her ears, so that she could not see or hear anything. Presently she ventured to look up again, and saw the apparition slowly fading away.



By MRS, HUNGERFORD,

Author of "Molly Bawn," "Phyllis," "The Hoyden," &c.

CHAPTER VIII.

"On grass, on gravel, in the sun,
Or now beneath the shade,
They met in pleasant Kensington
A prentice and a maid."

It is an hour later; already the golden light of the day is giving place to a tender twilight. The great heat has died away, a little breeze has been born, and above are the—

"Skies fulfilled with the snndown stilled and splendid, spread

As a flower that spreads."

Janie's single with O'Grady has come to an untimely end long ago, lost in a storm of words, hardly parliamentary on Janie's part, and now Mrs. Egerton who, it has been said, is no mean opponent at tennis, and can give as strong a service as any man, having won her set triumphantly, has come up looking flushed and very handsome to greet a large man, in a large loose coat, and with an excellent expression, who has just come across the grass.

"Ventured to drop in," says Colonel Eyre, in his jerky style. "Heard the balls going as I went across the short cut through your place a minute ago, and couldn't resist" (faint) "them." He looks at her in his quiet way. Was it the balls he couldn't resist?

"So really glad you have come," says Mrs. Egerton, speaking rapidly, and feeling horribly ashamed of the colour that has risen to her pretty cheeks; she'd have been more ashamed if she had dared to call it a blush. A blush at her age! What nonsense! But how strange his coming to-day—nearly every man in the place (there are very few of them) seems to have come to-day. Could William Eyre, too, have heard that the squire would be away this afternoon?

Madge, with her eyes alight, has flung herself (tired out from trying to defeat her aunt) on to the grass—where Victor Mowbray swiftly follows her. Vincent is still talking in her soft, low, plaintive tones to Cedric; yet sometimes as she speaks, she looks round her, as if wondering—uncertain.

The footman has brought out the tea, and arranged it conscientiously under the spreading chestnut tree, then, according to custom, has gone away. The Graces always say they "hate" servants at afternoon tea. "Let us be free from our masters for once." So Thomas has gracefully retired, and the teapot lies waiting mournfully.

"No one to dispense the indispensable," says Mr. O'Grady, waking from a fresh argument with Janie on cricket, to note the lassitude of Mrs. Egerton and Madge. "Then I shall rush into the fray."

"You are always in it, in my opinion," says Ianie, scornfully.

"And who leads me there? Answer me that, if you can. It's" (severely) "not a swindle—it's a perfectly fair conundrum."

"Like yourself," says Janie, scornfully; "only you are not fair."

"Dreadfully rude," says Mr. O'Grady. He draws himself up, clasps his hands before him, screws up his lips, and closes his eyes. He had seen a painting of her great-grandmother in the drawing-room, and now manages to look exactly like it.

"It was not rude," indignantly. (Afterwards, when in a better temper, she made him do it all over again, and was delighted with the caricature of old Lady Mendare.) "I only meant that you were dark, and for the matter of that," warming as recollection returns to her, "you aren't fair any way. I'm sure that last serve of yours——Was that fair?"

"Better not look into it—there are lots of things, dear Janie," says Mr. O'Grady, with anxious consideration for her youth, "that when you are older" (here Janie grows restive) "you had better not look into either. But tea is exempt from those nice, if rather naughty, things. You may have seen that remarkable line—'Look not on the wine when it is red'—nothing about sherry or champagne—by the way. But on tea—there is no restriction on tea. On tea you may always look without the faintest loss of your maiden bloom. Come! and help me to pour it out for the thirsty multitude."

"I don't believe you know how," says Janie, who, on the head of having "discovered" him, has taken him specially in hand.

"Don't I! That's all you know about it. I always do it at Ballyclash."

Here he lifts and wields the teapot with the air of a master. He is, indeed, now as much at home with these new cousins of his as if he and they had been brought up by the same nurse.

"But your sisters?" questions Janie—("Don't put in the sugar—some people don't like it")—
"your sisters?"

"No sugar! Ah! true! there are a lot of fools in the world!"

"Sugar isn't fashionable any longer."

"Just what I mean. Fashion makes fools. But as to my sisters. They never pour out tea, they haven't time."

"No time-to pour out tea?"

"Not a second. They are always as busy as they can be."

Janie considers.

"They must be good girls," says she.

"They are: excellent."

"What is it?" asks Janie, diffidently, who is not specially useful in any line herself, and who is now beginning to feel lost in remorseful admiration of these "good" sisters of his, of whom, he last night plaintively informed them, he had nine.

Fancy, *nine* useful, busy girls in one house! Could any house contain so much virtue? It must be big! And how charming a house; how exquisitely kept—with nine useful virgins in it! And then their village—he had told them some lively stories of Ballyclash village—what a model village it must be!

"What is it?" asks she again, Mr. O'Grady seeming lost in thought. "District visiting? Working for the poor?"

"N-o," says Mr. O'Grady, thoughtfully.

" Painting, perhaps—or—drawing?"

" Not so much," says he.

"Ah! then music," says Janie, triumphantly.

"Well, no," says he, "they don't run much to that sort of thing."

"Then what is it?" demands Janie, nervously.
"Good gracious, what do these excellent girls do?"

Mr. O'Grady finishes the lump of sugar he has in his mouth—it is the sixth—and says cheerfully,

"They talk!"

" Talk!

"Yes, they are great at that. Talking is their metier. They never stop, morning, noon, or night. They are past-masters at it. When one's done (which takes time) the other comes on. Married or single they're all the same."

"Oh!" says Janie. It is the vaguest monosyllable, but it is eloquent both of intense surprise and of relief. The relief is even stronger. After all they are *not* so very superior. It is always odious to hear of people who could give you points where the virtues are concerned. "Married or

— Then some of them are married?"

"A few, I am grateful to say. Four of 'em. But it doesn't count. They talk more now—if possible."

"Four! That leaves five?"

"I think so. Yes——" adding it carefully up on his fingers. "Four and five do make nine. Go up one, Janie—— Fancy doing it in a hurry like that. Who taught you the trick?"

"Stuff!" says Janie, whose manners leave a

good deal to be desired. "Five still unmarried, then?"

"Yes; but it isn't their fault. I say, Mrs. Egerton, aren't you coming along here? The tea is growing positively *black*. No one's nerves—not even Janie's—will run to it soon."

Mrs. Egerton, to whom this shout finds its way imperfectly, rises slowly, and nods a smiling acquiescence to him. Colonel Eyre rises with her.

"Such a nice boy!" breathes she to Eyre in a sort of sotto voce way. It has occurred to her of late that it is delightful to have little confidences with the colonel. "A sort of cousin of the girls, you know. Irish—very Irish, but enchanting. I assure you I am half in love with him already."

"I hope not," says Colonel Eyre. He gives her a quizzical glance that has under it something of earnest meaning. "At all events I hope the second half will be found missing."

Mrs. Egerton laughs, and a rather heightened colour comes into her face that makes her ten years younger, and turns towards the tea-table, he following.

"Not their fault," Janie is saying, a little disgustedly—everyone is still a long way off. "Do you mean to tell me they try to get married?"

"It's not so much that," begins he, guardedly.

"Oh, but it must be," says Janie, who is now revelling in the thought that, after all, it is she who is superior to his sisters—not they to her. She, at all events, has never tried to get married.

"Well, it isn't, really," says he. "Though with regard to the others——" Here he pauses, and abstains, as it were, from details, though with evident pain to himself.

"Then what is it?" asks Janie, austerely. He may defend the remaining five sisters as well as he can, if he can!—but she knows. Try to get married—odious girls! "Why don't you speak? Facts for me; I like facts!"

"Do you?" says Mr. O'Grady, who has now been doing wonders with the macaroons. "Well, the facts in this case are that my remaining five sisters are still in the *nursery!*"

A long, long pause.

"So young as that?" asks Janie presently, in a rather stifled tone.

"It's unconscionable, isn't it? They "-with a jovial air-"are very nearly as young as I am."

"You? Nonsense—why you must be——"

"I'm not, I assure you; I shan't be that until my next birthday."

"Be what?"

"What you were going to say."

"But what was that?"

" Fourteen."

"Don't be so stupid," cries Janie, almost fiercely.
"Am I a fool or a baby, do you think?"

"The last for choice," says Mr. O'Grady.
"There, keep your hair on! Have a macaroon."

"I hate macaroons. Fourteen, indeed—why you must be quite twenty-two!"

"Janet!" says Mr. O'Grady, solemnly, who has now begun to tackle the hot cakes; "if you continue as you have begun, you will end by being a charming woman. My last birthday made me twenty-three, and when one is getting into the sere and yellow leaf, as I am, it is a distinct delight to hear from a truthful source that one doesn't look within ten years of one's age."

" Cnc, I made it."

"Don't spoil it! Dont spoil it! Oh. here you are at last, Mrs. Egerton! Sugar? No? Your life can't be worth living. Vincent, you come and sit by me."

The blind girl has come up with Cedric, but now, seeing her a little nervous, Batty slings his arm through hers, and leads her, with an absurd jest or two, but a steady hand and the greatest tenderness, to a garden seat upon his right, where, after a moment, Tom Brande takes a place beside her.

CHAPTER IX.

"Loke who that is most vertuous alway,
Prive and apert, and most extendeth ay
To do the gentil dedes that he can,
And take him for the gretest gentilman."

T is late when Victor Mowbray, having said good-bye to his hostess, goes quickly on his way homewards, along the happy summer lanes that lead to Braystown—a corruption of Mowbraystown—where he lives in his uncle's absence. His heart is on fire as he walks. Never has the world seemed so fair to him as to-night—never has the sky seemed so rich in beauty—never has she seemed so near to him.

His childhood had been so singularly joyless, that a touch of such wild happiness as comes to him now, stirs his heart to extravagant depths. Since he had been unwillingly received by his uncle, Lord Mowbray, he had been kindly treated enough, and every advantage given to him in the way of education; but there had been no love thrown into the cold adoption of him, and, indeed, Lord Mowbray, being a confirmed invalid, and very seldom at home, he and Victor had remained almost strangers to each other. The latter had lost his father (Mowbray's only brother) the year he was born. Mowbray had not liked his brother—there were few things, indeed, in common between them—and the breach between the two had become hopelessly wide on George Mowbray's marriage with a girl—beautiful and good, indeed, but considerably beneath him in station.

Lord Mowbray had never forgiven the mesalliance, but on the death of his sister-in-law, who died five years after her husband, he had been persuaded by his lawyer, an old and intimate friend of the family, to take up Victor, who was then barely six years old: the boy, though the son of detested parents, was undoubtedly heir to the title—and very little else—unfortunately for him.

Begrudgingly, Mowbray consented to have the boy educated at his expense, and to spend his holidays at Braystown. Once or twice during these vacations he had chanced to be there himself, and had seen the little lad, but had evinced no interest in him whatsoever.

Thus the boy had grown up, unloved, uncared for, in the higher sense. He had passed through college with great distinction, and had come home to Braystown to wait. His heart was full of a career, but no word had been said to him of a profession. There had been talk of Mowbray's return before long, but nothing definite was known by anyone, and so Victor was waiting-at times a little impatiently. To be left with a bare title, and no profession, seemed to him to fall short of justice. He had many bitter moments, and many lonely ones, poor boy, and it was only on the coming of Mrs. Egerton to "The Court," and after the acquaintanceship with the girls (very slowly developed, on account of the Squire's crustiness), that the lad's heart began to feel the warmth and sweetness of friendship-a friendship that in his and Madge's case was fast deepening into love.

He is now on the outskirts of the village, a quaint, pretty nest of cottages in this dim light. And, as

he goes through it, many a one steps out to bid him a courteous good-evening, for not only is Victor Mowbray a great favourite with all these poor people, but in his uncle's absence they regard him as their lawful master—the Heir of the "Big House," as they call "Braystown"—in spite of the fact that though he must inherit the title, the most material part—the rentals—have been left away from him to Paul Swindon, Lord Mowbray's other nephew, and his sister's son. The bare title, and a ridiculously small income of three hundred a year, is all that is left Victor to carry on the good old name.

"Is that you, sir?" says a woman, stepping out from her door into the roadway, where Victor is walking along, swinging his stick to the tune of many happy thoughts—all of Madge.

"What can I do for you, Mrs. Wildon?" asks he, stopping in the centre of the small street, and accosting the woman with his usual gentle courtesy.

"Only this, sir: I want you to say a word for me to his lordship about the cottage. It wants repairs badly, sir."

"It do, indeed," says a friendly neighbour, who has come out from her cottage to aid and abet Mrs. Wildon.

"Why don't you speak to Mr. Rice?" says Victor, alluding to the agent.

"Oh! sir, I have. But he's that hard. And I thought a word from you, sir——"

"Oh! from me," says Mowbray, impatiently. From him! The last in the world to be of any use! He keeps back his thoughts, however, and goes on. "I'll remember to tell my uncle of it when I write, but you know," with a smile and a slight shrug of his shoulders, "I have very little influence with him." No influence would have been nearer the mark, but he could not bring himself to say it.

"Oh! sir," says Mrs. Wildon, "if it ain't you, who is it as can persuade him?"

Victor pauses; then with a frown, but with a good deal of honesty, he says,—

" Mr. Swindon."

"Oh! laws, sir, where's the use o' he? Mr. Swindon has little fancy for the likes o' we. But you, sir, the heir as it was."

"Oh! no, anything but that," says the young man, hastily.

"But ye'll have th' owd name, sir, you know you

will," says the friendly neighbour; "and knowing that, his lordship will listen to you."

This admirable woman has been joined by many others until now nearly half the village is present, all arguing in their different ways not only the necessity for improvements in Mrs. Wildon's cottage, but in their own. It is a most orderly gathering and very respectable, if one excepts a tall, gaunt lad, who, standing upon the outskirts of the small crowd, lounges idly in and out of itthough very evidently not of it. There is a city look about him, a look of the back slums, a look of the waif and stray who has for years kept himself by his wits from dying of absolute hunger. Now this keen, hungry look-the look of the creature who has never had enough to eat, and who has known what starvation means from the very hour of his birth-is accentuated.

Gaunt, reckless, steeped in crime and misery, this lad of about eighteen stalks amongst the villagers, into whose midst he has dropped to-day, out of his many wanderings to drift away again to-morrow God knows where; always with that shadow of vice and misery covering him as with a garment. It is, by the way, the most noticeable one he has on. The more tangible ones—that barely hide his emaciated limbs—are mere rags, hanging together only by those extraordinary devices that are known to all vagabonds, and to them alone.

The little crowd is still entreating Victor to do something for them and for Mrs. Wildon, and he laughing—though a little saddened as the truth of his position, and the poverty of it is thus forced home upon him—is pushing his way slowly through the people, when a noise behind him, a scuffle, and now a desperate curse, brings him to a standstill.

What has happened? He turns—to see the haggard, wretched lad, whom he had noticed a while ago on the outskirts of the crowd, held by two stalwart villagers. And now a very babble of voices uprises.

- "He's got your purse, sir."
- "I seed him take it."
- "A jail bird, if ever there was one."
- "A jail bird!"—Victor looks at him. Great Heavens! What a face! Ghastly now, and writhing, and so intolerably wretched, and—so awfully young! Life has only just begun for him

—what has life left to yield? Whatever it may bring him, hope surely is left out. The pallid face is wet with the sweat that grew upon it as he struggled like a wild beast with his captors—two ordinary, stolid, well-fed men of the village, who have, from their childhood, been brought up in virtue's ways.

The thief has drawn back to the very length of his arms, on which the men are hanging, and his mouth is fixed in a sort of defiant snarl. He looks half wild with rage and terror. Rage against his present position, perhaps, or perhaps against the fact that he was born at all. Who can say?

But his eyes, maddened, desperate, are fixed upon Victor, who, indeed, at this moment, has become his judge and jury all in one.

The latter, turning deadly white, feels his heart sink within him. The hunted, wretched look of the unhappy lad appeals to him so strongly, that it seems to cut into his heart. Homeless! friendless! loveless! A bitter wave of memory, carrying him backwards, makes him feel all at once akin to this sad sport of life, tossed thus into his pathway. He-Victor Mowbray-well-clad, well-cared for. So far, not homeless-yet on the brink of it (for this very castle of Braystown that has grown dear to him, through the association of years-and that ought to be his in all fairness-will be given away from him to Swindon at Mowbray's death with all the rest). Friendless-loveless, too. No! Nonot loveless. How greatly does he differ from this poor fellow.

A quick warm thrill rushes through his veins. Madge-he has Madge to think upon, while this poor wretch-Ah! there had been a comparison between them before, but not now. And yet there is, for had not the old man given in so far as to take him into his house, he, Victor Mowbray, on his mother's death, might have been left starving (as probably this boy has often starved), and starving means a fight for life, a terrible fight, that carries one through all risks, all hazards, and into the very depths of crime! Life one will have! Life beyond all things! So it might have come about that in his struggle for existence he, too, might have become (but for his uncle's intervention), altogether such an one as this unfortunate poor waif before him now, staring at him with brilliant menacing eyes.

With this, there wakes within him a touch of

strange, quick sympathy for the miserable, guilty, defiant fellow. To help him! But how?

At this moment the unfortunate lad makes a last mad effort to escape from his holders' hands, and, being defeated, breaks into a loud and sudden awful burst of blasphemy, that, coming from such young lips, seems to thrill the air with horror.

Victor, his face white and set, goes quickly up to the group.

"Let him go," says he, sternly; and the men, accustomed to obey, slowly and reluctantly loosened their grasp, leaving the culprit free. A little murmur of surprise runs through the crowd of villagers.

As for the thief, he stands still, breathing heavily—sobbingly. His eyes—glistening, evil eyes—glancing from right to left of him, as if to find a way of escape. Anything more like a caged wild thing, given an unexpected chance of liberty, could hardly be imagined.

"You are quite free," says Victor, slowly, in a low, soft tone. "You can go, if you wish—anywhere. But—I want you to come home with me."

The beggar casts a suspicious glance at him. Is this a dodge? A way to trap him the more easily? He scans Victor's features closely—cunningly—with all the awfully sad cunning of the truly wretched; and then—somehow his head droops, his eyes sink. Victor's beautiful face, so strong, yet so pitiful, with its expression of mingled sympathy and gentleness, has, in a way, frightened him. Sympathy, pity, tenderness, they are all so strange, as to be almost a terror to this miserable boy.

"You will come?" says Victor, gently.

"I don't care!" the air is sullen, but the defiance, the rage is gone. He looks like one mesmerised.

"Come, then."

"'Ome, wi' you?"

"Yes."

"Law, sir," cries Mrs. Wildon, in a shrill treble; "to trust yourself alone wi' a born scamp like that—"

"Not a word," says Mowbray, quietly, but with authority—and in silence he lays his hand upon the beggar's arm, and draws him onwards.

In silence, too, they reach the castle; and in silence, the hall door lying wide open, he leads the ragged boy over the tesselated pavements of the halls towards the library.

The boy follows him as in a dream, but as Victor opens the library door, he draws back.

"Wot do 'ee want to do wi' me?" asks he, with a frown,

"Only to talk to you," says Victor, in his clear voice. "Believe me, you are as free as air to come and go. But I want to know how all this came about—to help you if I can. Don't refuse my help." He is so much in earnest that, though he has thrown open the door of the library, he fails to hear inside the room a slight movement—a step or two—a cautious opening of a door beyond, across which a screen is placed—and then a closing of this door that is only partial.

CHAPTER X.

" Sick in the world's regard, Wretched and low,"

The thief, as though still in a half-dream, follows Victor into the library: a grand old room, made rich with treasures from all lands. Some of the books that line the walls are priceless, so is some of the statuary. Pictures there are none, except one or two on easels, as the bookcases line the walls, reaching up to the lofty ceiling. But, as if to relieve the sense of overpowering thought that these old volumes, in their open cases, seem to impress upon the air, there are in the windows, and in the many corners, light things, that though costly, redeem the room from sadness.

The corners are, indeed, specially beautiful.

Porcelain jars and pots shine out from them, glinting delicately against the dark oak background, as the fire strikes upon them—whilst the deep embrasures of the four large windows are glowing with scented blossoms. There is, too, here and there, a touch of Oriental splendour, that sits like a smile in the sombre dear old room.

The beauty of it all is accentuated by the middle figure in it—the forlorn vagrant and criminal! who, in his disreputable rags, is a hideous blot upon its grandeur. The poor wretch seems to feel this. He shuffles nervously from leg to leg—waiting—waiting always for his doom to be spoken. Even through the infatuation that has compelled him to follow Victor, he has thought of nothing, but that at the end there would be punishment. How could he—who had never in all his short life found mercy from any living thing, even in his own unfortunate class—expect to find mercy now, from this young aristocrat.

"I have it here," says he, slowly. "I know ye

knew it all along. But what's your game?" He pulls the purse out of his pocket and holds it out. Victor takes it in silence (it is very light), and drops it idly from hand to hand as if thinking.

"It was scarcely worth it," says he, at last, in a low tone.

"Ow'd 1 know?" replies the thief, callously. How, indeed! The purse might as well have been fat as lean—and the young heir—who, after all, is not the heir where the property is concerned—ought to have had a full one.

"What is your name?" asks Victor, presently.

"I don't know-Matt I calls mysel'."

" Matt-what?"

"Matt nothin'-so far as I knows on."

There is something utterly forlorn in this statement—made with a certain sullenness. Victor's eyes unconsciously fill with tears. Drawing closer to the disreputable vagrant, he seats himself on the corner of the table nearest to him; there is something friendly—unconventional—in the movement, and the convicted thief glances at him from under his bent brows. So has he sat sometimes (when allowed) in the lowest of low public-houses. "Why 'ang it! My leg 'as often dangled down just like the leg o' this 'ere bloomin' swell." Still distrust rages within his breast, and presently he tells himself this is but a "bit o' bluff, to git 'im."

"I suppose," says Victor, gently, "you have"—he glances at the purse—"done this before?"

"Yer all there, Gov'nor."

" Often ? "

"'Tisn't often there's a chance."

"Twice, perhaps?"

"Ay!" the lad grins defiantly. He knows he is condemning himself, yet in some strange way he knows he cannot lie to this man, who is so few, so very few, years older than he.

"This is the third time, then?" says Victor, edging closer to him along the table.

" Av."

"The third time is the charm," says Victor, smiling. He has moved even closer, and is now quite near Matt, rubbing shoulders with him almost. "I expect you have come to your turning-point. But—what I want to know is, why did you ever do it? Why did you do it first?"

The thief, twiddling with his cap, looks down.

"Come, tell me," says Victor—and suddenly he lifts his hand and lays it upon the other's arm—

that ragged, dirty arm. Matt starts, as if Victor had struck him.

"I wanted money!" says he, hoarsely.

Victor tightens his grasp.

"And the second time?"

"I," with increasing sullenness, "wanted money."

"And-this time?"

"Money, too!" says the wretched, ragged creature, flinging the kindly hand off his arm as though it burnt him.

Victor gets to his feet; his face is pale; he will see the end of this—the truth of it.

"For what?" asks he.

The boy bursts into a delirious laugh.

"For bread!" cries he, "if you'll have it!—I was hungry. I am hungry. I've bin hungry all my life. I've never 'ad enough to eat. Never! never!"

There is such a frightful rage, such ferocious anger in his voice as might make a strong man shudder; but Victor, going up to him, lays his hand again upon his arm.

"But you are young, you are strong. Why not work for your bread?" asks he.

"I did—I tried; and I made money enough to keep me that way for a while. But it was hard work, and I broke down.—I was but a weak chap. Then fever took me.—They put me in Orspital an' kep' me there two months. I was too weak when I come out to work again.—But I was hungry.—I took a loaf of bread—I swear to you," suddenly flashing his strange, wild eyes at Victor, "that was the first time."

"How long ago?" asks Victor, in a low tone, he is feeling now inexpressibly saddened.

"Two years."

"And after that?"

"I stole everything I could lay my hands to," says the lad, doggedly. "I'd done it once, you see, an' there was no going back."

"A mad thought," says Victor. He is silent awhile. "One can often retrace one's steps," says he presently. "You can! You know," quietly, "that the steps you are taking lead to jail."

"Ay, I know. A 'jail bird' that fellow yonder called me. Well, ye can send me there, when," insolently, "ye're done prating at me."

" What?" says Victor, frowning. He gets up

and walks up and down the room for a minute or so, without speaking. "Did you think that of me—that I would keep you here to make holiday for myself out of your misfortunes? I'm not such a cad as that. I brought you here," coming to his side again, "to see what I could do for you—I like your face—and, I shall never think about this again," he points to the purse lying on the table. "Indeed," impulsively, "I'll give it to you."

"No, no," says Matt, huskily. "I can't abear the sight of it."

"Very well. I'll chuck it away somewhere, and then *neither* of us will see it again. In the meantime," taking the money out of it, "this may as well go with some more to get you some decent clothes."

"Clothes?" the boy once again turns a suspicious glance on him.

"Yes. Look here! I want you to come and live here: I'll give you some employment. Say stable boy at first—and afterwards, perhaps, undergroom—and so on; or if you would rather be about myself, the man I have now is going to Australia in a few months, and in the meantime you might learn from him—."

(Here—if he had only known it—Victor's speech throws someone, standing in the lobby outside the half-closed door, that is guarded by the screen, into silent convulsions of mirth.)

An angry exclamation from the thief has stopped him.

"What are ye codding me for?" says he, coarsely—roughly.

"You think I don't mean it?" says Victor.
"But I do. I tell you I like you, and I can sympathise with you. I," slowly, "was very poor myself once."

"Oh, I know what the likes o' you call poor!" says Matt, with a rugged scorn.

"Don't mistake me," says Victor. "I was so poor at one time, so utterly without resource of any kind, that," calmly always, but now with a faint red flush rising to his forehead, "I should probably have starred but for my uncle, Lord Mowbray. He gave me a home here, and—every care. So you see," anxiously, "that our cases are not altogether so dissimilar—though, of course, I know they seem so."

"Ye've 'ad someone to love ye, anyway," says Matt.

"Love me?" Victor's colour, already a little high, now grows crimson. Madge—he draws his breath quickly—then the sudden glad fear subsides. What could he know of Madge—and for the rest—

"How do you mean?" says he.

"Why, that Lord ye spoke of just now."

"Lord Mowbray!" Victor's brow contracts a little as if with pain or regret. Perhaps both. "Oh, no, he does not love me," says he. "He has been very kind to me. But—— However, he is so kind always, that I am sure if I write to him to say I should like you to have a place here, he will not refuse me."

"Refuse yer! No. There ain't a bloke in the world as would refuse you anythink," says the waif, with a sudden emphasis that amounts almost to passion.

"Oh yes. there is," says Victor, laughing involuntarily. "Many blokes, for the matter of that. But, though I don't know him very well, Lord Mowbray has, as I of all people have reason to know, a good heart—and I am sure he will give you a chance in the stables, or, perhaps, with the gamekeeper."

"'Twould be no sort of use," says the boy, with a groan. He stands shifting himself nervously from foot to foot—"If you will let me go——"

"Well, I won't," says Victor, advancing to him, and laying his hands upon his shoulders. "See here now, Matt. Try this offer of mine."

The lad lifts his eyes to his with a despairing refusal in them.

"Why not? I'll stand your friend."

"You! My friend!" A terrible laugh breaks from his throat. "Why, ye'd chuck me out in a week."

"I don't think so." Victor still with his hands on the other's ragged shoulders, gives them a little shake. "Come, take courage. You will engage here as stable boy?"

"You said something else," says the lad, slowly, speaking with a face that now is livid, but with eyes that seem to burn into Victor's; "something about my being near you! If—if I might be that—whatever it is—"

There is a passion of love new-born in his glance, and an entreaty that has pain in it.

"You want to be what Jones is," says Victor. "Well," calmly, "you shall."

"You mean it, sir?", There is something almost terrible in the glance of the lad, as he looks now at Victor. "You'll trust me? You'll give me back what I've lost?" Suddenly a bitter cry breaks from him, and he falls on the ground and clasps Victor's knees. "Oh! my God, sir! You'll never be sorry for this day—never, never."

"I know it," says Victor. It is with difficulty he keeps back his emotion. But he does conquer it, and compels himself to take, with a lighter tone, a lighter view of the situation—all for the purpose of reassuring this poor creature, against whom fate seems to have done its worst.

"And now as to clothes," cries he, cheerily.
"It will never do for the other servants to see you like this. Come, I have an idea! You and I are much of a height; and I think I have some old things of mine that will suit you. But the real question is how to get them on. Neither I nor you, Matt, would like to see my future servant in anything but presentable coat and breeches. But how to manage it?"

He walks thoughtfully up and down the room, and, as he goes, his glance flings itself out of the window to where a summer-house, little used in this empty mansion, may be seen.

"Ah! I have it," cries he, gaily. "You shall go out there." He beckons Matt to the window and shows him with a gesture the summer-house, "and presently I shall bring you those old clothes of mine, and then you shall dress, and emerge from it a new man. My man!"

He claps the thief on the shoulder with the gayest gesture. "Now then, buck up," cries he, laughing.

But Matt stands as if stricken into marble. He makes an attempt to speak, but his lips refuse to give utterance to his words. At last——

"I stole yer purse," says he.

"Why, what of that," returns Victor. "I've forgiven that."

" I might steal it again."

"Not you," heartily. "I'll trust you for that. Come, now! make haste. My future servant must not be seen in clothes like these. Run out there to the summer-house—you see it? and I'll be with you in a minute."

He draws Matt towards the open window, and the ragged fellow, worn and exhausted, goes with him so far, then stops, and looks at him. "You-you trust me," says he.

"Why, yes," says Victor.

Matt stands—gazing at him—silently, terribly, as if struggling with his soul. Then all at once his thoughts burst into wild, somewhat incoherent language.

"Yes, it is!" says he. "Ay! and you may bet yer life on it!" His face is now as white as a sheet. "You may trust me, sir, and to the death! If ever you want me, and I'm not there—by Heaven," cries the lad, shrilly, "I hope I'll be found wanting, too, in the last day."

CHAPTER XI.

"Came it to your ears to hear
What the thin philosopher
One day in his wisdom said
To a great fat pudding-head?
'Friend,' quoth he, 'an Arab steed
Though he should be lean indeed,
By his quality surpasses
Any stableful of asses,'"

A SLIGHT silence reigns in the library for a few minutes after the two late occupants have left it. Then the door at the farther end—that had been but half-closed—opens softly, and presently from behind the screen a tall, gaunt man emerges slowly. Reaching the central writing-table, he sinks heavily into the chair before it.

His face is full of complex emotions, and now it seems to grow sterner with every thought. It is a face that might have been termed noble but for the touch of obstinacy that, in a sense, disfigures it. It is also a face that has the touch of death upon it.

Presently he draws a little sheaf of letters from an inside pocket, and hurriedly runs his eyes over them; three or four in all, but filled with such pungent matter as makes him wince at times. He throws them down impatiently at last, and rising to his feet, begins to pace up and down the room. Pshaw! why waste time over such letters, especially when their contents are writ so large upon his brain. They are all of Paul Swindon and his doings— very sorry doings! Old Stamer, the lawyer, had written them—and Stamer was just one of those men whose word it would be impossible to doubt.

Such a hideous account of the man he had chosen to make his heir—to whom he would gladly indeed have left his title, if that could have

been—the man to whom he had willed everything else certainly to the exclusion of the lad, to whose noble efforts to redeem a soul he had but just now been witness.

Lord Mowbray drops once more into his chair and sits thinking deeply. He had arrived home only this afternoon from Mentone, without having sent word to his household as to his coming. Those accounts of Swindon had driven him back from the sunny climate where he loved to dwell to his own home—and on his coming he had found the house deserted but for the servants.

Victor, as we may remember, entered the library with his captive without meeting a soul, Mowbray, hearing of his coming, having walked quietly outside the far door and there set himself dehberately to learn something of this other nephew, to whom up to this he had given so few thoughts. He had not regarded the act as dishonourable. Indeed, he had not thought of it at all in that light. Sore at heart because of these stories of Paul Swindon, so sadly sure of foundation, he had determined to learn something as sure of Victor—one way or the other.

Again he looks at the letters lying on the table before him, so damnatory, so hopelessly true. Black as night does Swindon's life shine, against the life of this lad, Victor—poor George's son—against whom he had so vindictively set his heart. And this boy must have the title—must carry on the good old name. But on what? A paltry three hundred a year. The only sum that it was out of his, Mowbray's, power to leave away from him.

He leans back in his chair, and an extra greyness grows upon the face that is always so bloodless—so suggestive of dissolution—near! What was this Stamer had said of Paul—Oh, shameful! Shameful! What if he, Mowbray, had made a mistake after all; had delivered his inheritance into hands so dyed with dishonour, that never again could a Mowbray hold up his head? At first, long, long ago, it had seemed impossible to him to leave the property to the son of a woman whose father had been but a draper in a small country town, but now—

All at once Victor's face comes back to him, and again he sees him as he was but a while ago, standing beside the wretched, ragged boy—pleading with him—comforting him. And all so earnestly, yet so naturally, without a suspicion of

cant or self-righteousness. There had been nothing beyond the bare longing to help some one, who had nothing but the—

"Blackness of darkness before him Lurid with lights that lead only to uttermost hell."

And what was it Victor had said about—him to that vagrant?

"He has been very good to me."

Mowbray's heart contracts as not only the words, but Victor's face as he said them, comes back to him. He had been much struck by the young man's nobility of face, and struck, too, by the very singular resemblance he bore to—himself. Looking at him through the half-closed doorway, it had seemed to Mowbray as though he was looking on his own past self—only glorified.

Has he been "good to him"? In the letter, perhaps—certainly not in the spirit. How coldly he has treated this boy who has so many elements of true greatness in him, and who might carry on for many generations in honour and distinction, the name that belongs to him. He had not even borne malice against him—Mowbray, the only relation he has, and the one who has most disgracefully neglected him in the smaller ways, that are so often the bigger ways of life.

"'1 should probably have starved but for my uncle, Lord Mowbray!'"

"Oh. no; he does not love me!"

True; true. The son of George, whom he had so hated (and perhaps with some small reason). No, he does not love the boy. He does not even now love him. But—for all that—

This lad—George's boy!—is heir to the tit'e. Is it right to let the heir get the title only, with nothing to keep it up with? George's boy! His mind goes back to those old days when George and he were children together, and when—though they had fought then, too—they had still been the keenest allies. He sighs heavily.

At this moment the sound of footsteps in the garden outside disturbs his thoughts, and he goes languidly to the window. The figure of a tall, slight young man goes past as he looks out. Evidently some one in a hurry—and quite as evidently, Victor. Victor Mowbray is indeed walking as fast as he can, though to hurry under his circumstances is difficult. He is armed and loaded. One side of him is packed with clothing of all sorts, the other carries a bag, half open, out of which the knuckle of a ham and a loaf of bread are protruding. From one of his pockets a bottle is stretching out its' neck, and from the other the handle of a hair brush.

"Evidently he has forgotten nothing," says Lord Mowbray to himself, with a half-amused, halfcynical air.

He follows Victor's flight across the garden. It seems full of deceit. There is no doubt at all about the fact that he inclines to the shadowed places, and gives a wide berth to those from which he can be seen from the kitchen windows, that control one side of this small garden.

Mowbray breaks into a burst of laughter, to which he has long been a stranger.

"He's been stealing," says he, "from Mason" (Mason is the cook). "Evil communications. He has been taking lessons from his pupil. Ah! But what a kind heart it is! What a nature! Once I felt like that. Good to the poor, the wretched. I would to God I could feel like that again. Like that boy again." He casts a last glance at Victor's departing figure. He has now entered the summerhouse, where Matt is awaiting him, and is lost to sight.

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Lord Mowbray is still sitting in the library, when the door is flung open, and Victor enters.

"I didn't hear until this moment that you had come," cries he, impetuously. "I'm awfully sorry. If I had known you were coming, I should have been at home to receive you."

"Yes?" Mowbray shakes hands with him, retaining Victor's hand for a moment in his own. "You had other things to see to, apparently."

"Other things?" Victor hesitates and flushes slightly. His thoughts have flown to Madge. Could—could his uncle have known that he spent the afternoon with her—have heard of—of—

"Waifs and strays, for example," says Mowbray,

with a faint smile. "I don't mind telling you that I was here when you brought in that extremely grimy member of society; and so anxious was I for my bric-à-brac—or something else—that I stayed out there," pointing to the far door, "to see what would happen. Nothing happened. But I heard a good deal."

"You heard?"

"For one thing, that you are prepared to take as a bodyguard a most notorious young scoundrel. A fellow whose acquaintance began with you in such a friendly way, that he positively mistook *your* pocket for his own."

Victor laughs.

"It does sound rather Quixotic as you put it," says he; "but do you know I believe in the fellow, in spite of all the damnatory evidence against him."

"That's all very well." says Mowbray; "you can be as modern a Don Quixote as you like, as far as you are concerned, but I think you might have given a little consideration to me and my household."

"To you?" Victor knits his brow.

"To my silver, anyway. A young person taken in the act of stealing a purse, is hardly the one to be given 'free access' to a house where spoons and forks, and a few better things, are lying loose—courting his admiration."

"The silver!" Victor's face falls. "I declare," says he, "I never thought of that!"

"Young philanthropists never do think of anything, do they? Well, never mind. I sha'nt think of it either. I give you carte blanche about your protégé. Let us pray he will not disappoint us both!"

"I may engage him, then?" says Victor. "I was going to write to you about him. I think—I believe, he will prove honest. I have a sort of sympathy with him."

"Did that arise out of your expedition across the garden a while ago," says Mowbray. "I saw you go—laden with golden grain—grain stolen, I'm afraid." A grim, but not unkind, smile crossed his face—it is the first smile that Victor has ever seen there for him, and it gives him pause He draws his breath quickly. If—if only—this sole relation of his, would learn to like him.

"You saw me," says he, with a little nervousness born of his late thought. "You see, I thought he would feel it keenly being seen dress." Like that, and besides," laughing in spite of himself, "he was so confoundedly hungry that he would have disgraced himself in the hall below. So I took all I could find, without cook's knowledge, and fed him down there," pointing to the old summer-house. "Poor chap, he was starving; I couldn't bear to see it."

He breaks off abruptly as if at some too cruel memory.

"You said something a moment ago to me, Victor," says his uncle presently in a low tone, "that you felt a sort of sympathy with this unfortunate boy. You said the same thing to him. You meant—?" He asks the question, his eyes fixed on Victor's. It is a command.

"Well, sir," says Victor, with a touch of dignity that sits very well upon him, "it seemed to me that, but for certain circumstances, I might have been as he is to-day."

"And those circumstances?"

"Your goodness to me!" returns Victor in a low voice. There is nothing effusive in his tone, it is even a little cold.

It had been goodness, not kindness!

A silence ensues that lasts for many minutes.

"I wish we had known each other earlier," says Mowbray at last, and with unmistakable difficulty.

"If you will let me know you now --- " says Victor, turning quickly to him.

"Too late, I fear!" says Mowbray, smiling somewhat painfully. "My days are numbered, yours are but beginning. Still, for the rest of the time, we may surely be friends." He holds out his hand, and Victor takes it eagerly. Oh! if only he had known him like this before this.

After awhile another thought seizes on him, and something in his eyes, something of longing, makes itself known to Mowbray.

"Come tell me what is in your mind," says the older man gently.

"I have wanted for a long time to ask you about a profession," says the latter quickly. "I have rather set my mind upon engineering."

Mowbray remains silent, and sits as if thinking. "Then you have finished your course at college?"

- " Yes."
- "Honours?"
- "Yes," with a certain honest pride. "But what I want to say is——" his eyes fixed with distinct anxiety on Mowbray—"that I should like now

to start for myself in life. You have been very good to me, but——' He hesitates.

"I can't live for ever?" Mowbray looks at him from under lowered brows. He froms slightly—but Victor takes both glance and frown bravely.

"That thought was not in my mind, sir. But no man can live for ever. And every man must look out for himself." He flings up his head.

"Rightly said," says Mowbray, smiling, but sighing. "And so you want to leave the old place. Well-not yet, Victor, 1 beg you. Give me time." He pauses, and again that thoughtful look grows upon his face—a thought that leads him to his death, that he knows is near. A very little time is all he can ask of any man. "Promise me to stay here for the present at all events. You can study, and," with a sudden glimpse of humour, "you can employ yourself, and give your philanthropic principles full play in looking after your protégé. By-the-bye, talking of philanthropy, you are not the only fool in that line who lives here. You will have to look to your laurels, I can tell you. if you mean to beat the record in mad deeds of that sort on which you have embarked. I hear young Brande is here now—the eldest one—Cedric. He is quite an enthusiast, a sort of latter-day Samaritan. He will run you very hard, I can tell you."

"Oh, as to that," says Victor, laughing, "I don't go in for that sort of thing. I've got enough to do as a rule in looking after myself. The Home Missionary business would bore me to death. This one individual case—Matt's case—has taken me. I confess; but rather because I fancied the poor chap's face, than anything else, I am afraid."

"Well, I hope he won't disappoint you."

"Do you know," says Victor, with sudden strange certainty, "I feel he won't. In a sort of queer way I know it. Your silver," smiling, "will be quite safe, so far as he is concerned."

"It is very romantic," says Mowbray, dwelling with pleasure on the young man's charming face. "I thought we had outlived the romantic age; even in Italy—the home of it—it is dying out fast; yet here in prosaic England I find myself face to face with it again. To make the story perfect, this discovery of yours ought to do you a good turn in kind."

"Perhaps he will," says Victor, little thinking how true his words are likely to prove.

"Have you met Cedric Brande or his brother

Tom?" asks Mowbray, presently. "I knew the old Lord Sloane very well, and also Reginald Brande, the father of these young men. The latter died two or three years ago. His brother, the present Lord Sloane, is a big stout fellow. He's in China, at present, I think! Bad situation for him if this war creates a row in the interior. However, perhaps it will prove a mere flash in the pan. The Chinese are, as a rule, all "talkee talkee" and no performance, and it seems likely that these plucky little Japanese will bring them to book pretty shortly. Cedric, the elder boy, must be his heir. He struck me as being somewhat of a visionary when I met him in Florence last year, and I hear my judgment of him was a right one. Tom, the younger fellow, was more to my mind, and certainly more practicable for everyday purposes. You have met them?"

"To-day, for the first time, at 'The Court.' He and his brother were there; I agree with you about the brother; I much prefer him to Cedric, I was talking to—to Madge about him, and she thought as I did."

"Did she?" says Lord Mowbray. "I'm not surprised," looking at Victor's handsome face. "But in the meantime who is Madge? I feel as if I should like to agree with her." The tone is half bantering, wholly earnest.

A hot, dark colour flushes Victor's face.

"She is Miss Grace. You know Mr. Grace, I think."

"I do, indeed. A very old friend of mine. So old that I feel I must call upon him as soon as possible. I shan't stand on ceremony with him as my time here is short, and I shall have to go back to the South almost immediately. To-morrow I'll go and see him, I thirik. Perhaps," with a quizzical glance, "you would like to go with me?"

Their eyes meet. The younger man is still a little confused, but there is something in Mowbray's face that compels him to confidence.

"I should," says he.

At this they both laugh.

"I think you had better go and see to your protégé now," says Mowbray, still laughing.

(To be continued.)

POT-POURRI.

THE little red-rose at the garden gate
To a brown-bee near him humming,
His sorrow told disconsolate,

When he felt October coming:

"I were glad," he sighed, "to lose my pride And the beauty of my completeness,

And the last faint flush of my petals' blush, If I might but save my sweetness."

Now it chanced, at the wane of the Hunters' moon,

That a maiden wandered thither, And she sang to herself that late or soon

The choicest flowers must wither;

Then she idly stooped where the red-rose drooped,

For she pitied his lone condition, And with wide surprise in her beautiful

She heard his last petition.

She deemed it were ill to leave him there
For the autumn wind to grieve him,
And she schemed withal that his fragrance

rare,

Though he died, should never leave him; 'Twas October's fate to be overlate

To fulfil his harsh endeavour,

For in a gold jar of Satsuma, She bade him be sweet for ever.

On the Chippendale shelf his faded bloom Is the last and the sweetest comer,

And he filleth my lady's drawing-room

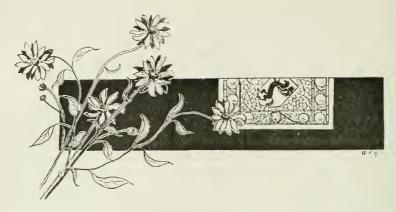
With a scent of the vanished summer;

And to each knick-knack of bric-à-brac, Though he seems but a rustic vagrant,

Yet the Chelsea man and the Pompadour fan

Confess that he still is fragrant.

ALFRED COCHRANE.



A SERMON ON HOUSES.

By LADY JEPHSON.

THE houses of nations are more or less characteristic of the races who inhabit them, Thus, for example, the Indian "bungalow," the South African "kraal," the American "shanty." the Italian "casa," and the Irish "mud cabin," are as distinct in character as the people which each variety of abode shelters. The palaces (like the Patricians) of nations differ surprisingly little. How like are those of Great Britain, Germany, Italy, France, Spain, and Russia, whilst Chinese and Indian palaces vary only so far as conditions of climate and Asiatic peculiarities necessitate. Houses, to be interesting, should express as far as possible in their arrangement, furniture, and decoration, the tastes and characters of the individuals who occupy them. Therein lies their greatest charm. No new abodes can rival in interest those in which successive generations have lived and left their history.

Old furniture and porcelain, tapestry and books, are objects of interest at all times; but how much more when we see them through the glamour which tradition and association lend. It behoves those, therefore, who start homes on their own account, to give to them the stamp of individuality, which the absence of historic associations and of family traditions renders necessary.

The man who hands over the adornment and

decoration of his home to a decorator and upholsterer, and originates nothing in it, may be rewarded by rooms severely synchronous, but will pay the penalty in lack of character and want of human interest. The drawing-room may be purest "Louis Quinze," the dining-room "Chippendale," the boudoir "Sheraton," and the smokingroom "Oriental"; yet the general effect will be that of a succession of show-rooms at a fashionable decorator's. You cannot buy expression or individuality as you can curtains and carpets. They are subtle, unmerchantable; and in these qualities lies their value. "The gods of fable are the shining monuments of great men." We imitate and try to model ourselves, our houses, and our lives on precedent; yet we are only great when we are purely original.

We learn much of philosophy from the teachings of history. As Emerson says: "We run all our vessels into one mould." It is right and natural that we should follow patterns set us, just as we begin with a word at the top of our first copy-book; but if we never made use of our faculty of penmanship for any other purpose than that of copying, we should be poor creatures indeed. "He is great who is what he is from nature, and who never reminds us of others." Houses, like people, are most interesting where they are original without

being bizarre; where they show character without affectation.

To trace the genesis of houses one must go a long way back in the history of the human race. We have scriptural authority for stating that Abraham and Isaac and their contemporaries abode in tents. In Ireland round buts have been discovered which the Philo-Israelites declare can be traced across Europe from Babylonian times. The ancient Briton pinned his faith to huts made of wattle and clay, and curious specimens of these have lately been disinterred at Glastonbury. Primeval man burrowed in the ground, or dwelt in caves or lake structures. Of ancient domestic architecture our most reliable information is what concerns the Romans. The usual form of building a domus or house (which differed in important particulars from the insulæ or several storied lodginghouses) was that of an atrium or court surrounded by rooms which opened into it, and derived light and air from the compluvium in the roof. Beneath the complurium lay a basin (termed an implurium) into which the rain fell. In a description of the Roman house by Professor Becker, we learn that the atrium was "the original focus" of all domestic life-"Somewhat," says he, "like the great Hall of the Mediæval Knight, and with it were connected all the most important incidents of their existence, from the cradle to the grave. In the old atrium stood the hearth (focus), serving alike for the profane purposes of cooking and also for the receptacle of the Penates. . . . Near the familiar flame they took their common meal (Cato in Serv. ad Virg., .En. i. 730)-et in atrio et duobus ferculis epulabantur antiqui. Here sat enthroned the mistress of the house in the midst of her maids; here was the thalamus nuptialis, and the strong-box of the father of the family. Several such have been dug up at Pompeii. Here all visits were received. Here the corpses of the deceased members of the family lay in state till their interment; here, lastly, were suspended the waxen masks or imagines, those dear mementoes of their deceased forefathers. For the admission of light and escape of smoke there was an opening in the roof, which was never of such magnitude as that the room lost its character of a ceiled apartment. But when the frugal family meal had given place to huge banquets, and instead of a few intimate friends and more familiar clients, whole troops of people crowded to the house, the whole arrangement of the atrium would suit no longer." The lares were now placed in a sacrarium, and the family hearth was moved to another part of the house, whilst all cooking took place in a room specially devoted to that purpose. Becker points out, however, that the atrium still continued to be the place where the dead lay in state, and where their images remained. As the opening in the roof was not now necessary for the purpose of a chimney, it gradually grew larger and larger, until the atrium was almost entirely open. What remained of the roof was often supported by pillars of beautiful marble, and carpets called vela were hung horizontally to protect the inhabitants of the villa from sun and rain. The implurium was gradually converted into a fountain, which gave scope to the artistic skill of sculptors and artists, and the mosaic pavements, in many instances, gave place to lawns and flower-beds. Before the atrium lay the vestibulum or porch, and, according to Cicero, Pliny, and Virgil, it was generally ornamented by "spolia" and equestrian statues. Here also the hospitable and graceful "salve" met the eye of the comer. The tablinum or dining-room lay behind the atrium, and behind that again and the cavum adium (or inner court) was the peristvlium. The small rooms which opened off the courts were called cubicula. The triclinia were smaller diningrooms. The roofs of Roman homes were chiefly flat, and these, we learn, "had a firm payement of stucco, stone, and metal. The sloping ones were covered with straw and shingles; later, with tiles, slates, and metal," Floors were usually paved with marble slabs, or inlaid with mosaic, except where (as in England) the ancient Romans substituted tiles in the absence of marble. Doors were of wood or metal; Parker describes them as "occasionally of marble, panelled, and turning on pivots working in sockets." Doorways, in those old times, were rectangular in form. In the latter and debased times of the Roman Empire they were arched, but as the arch was distinctly an innovation, and opposed to all classical principles, it belongs, properly speaking, to Gothic architecture. We must now turn our attention to the furniture of a house such as we have described, and from the collection of Pompeian curiosities to be seen in the Naples museum, as well as from contemporaneous frescoes we can readily form correct

ideas on the subject. Becker, in his Gallus oder Römische Scenen aus der Zeit Augusts, tells us that, "according to the ideas of the moderns, the Roman rooms would seem rather bare of furniture. Lecti, tables, chairs, and candelabra comprised the whole of the furniture, with the exception, now and then, of a water-clock or a coal-pan in winter. At the same time, the little they had was replete with elegance and splendour. The wooden lecti," he tells us, "were inlaid with ivory, tortoise-shell, and precious metals, and provided with ivory, silver, and gold feet." The bedsteads of Heliogobalus "caused surprise, being solido argento"; the majority of lecti were inlaid or veneered. The mattress or bed ("torus") was stuffed with locks of wool. "In olden times," says Becker, "they had nothing but straw mattresses, and in later also the poorer classes stuffed their beds with chopped sedge or hav. At a later period the voluptuous Roman became dissatisfied with wool, and not only the cervicalea, but also the torus, began to be stuffed with feathers"; and he quotes Pliny, Cicero, Juvenal and other writers as authorities for what he says.

"Chairs," says Becker, "were not so much used by the Romans as by us, and only required for visitors (Gell. ii. 2; Sen. de Clem. i. 9), although they also had exedra. A distinction is made between sella and cathedra, and the latter is assigned particularly to the women." "Sella denotes every kind of chair from the sella quotidiani quastus of the artisan (Cic. in Cat., iv. 8; Mus. Barb., iv. 6, 50) to the sella curulis. Chairs were in shape varied, and often," says Becker, "remarkably like our modern chairs. . . . The feet were most elegantly turned, and either straight or gracefully curved. The backs displayed an even greater variety. Sometimes there were none, as in the modern stool. Sometimes they are very low, others again are very tall, and incline forwards or backwards. But generally the back is semi-circular and broad. The frames of chairs were of wood (often veneered with ivory or other costly materials) or of metal like the lecti." With the chairs cushions were used. "Benches," says the same authority, "were not used in the houses of the wealthy Romans, except in the baths, or for the purpose of facilitating the ascent into the lectus." Tables were the source of immense extravagance to the ancient Romans, especially the monopodia,

which, according to Livy and Pliny came from Asia, and were made of "massive plates of wood, cut off the stem in its whole diameter. For this purpose the wood of the citrus was preferred above all others. These tables rested on an ivory column, and were thence termed monopodia. "Pliny relates that Cicero paid for a table of this description no less than 1,000,000 sesterces. For meals, larger tables of ordinary wood veneered with citrus were generally used. The small side-tables, used at meals, were usually of marble, "sometimes of silver, gold, or other costly material," and they were in shape generally square. Mirrors were portable in size, but they were often fastened to the walls of Roman houses. They were of metal, and the backs, says Becker, were "usually embossed." "In the earlier periods a composition of tin and copper was used, but, as luxury increased, those made of silver became more common." (Plin, xxx. iii. 90.) Tripods were much in evidence in wealthy houses, and were frequently of elaborate and exquisite workmanship, adorned with statues and reliefs. Cupboards and chests were also part of the indispensable furniture of a noble or wealthy Roman's house. They stood in the atrium, and were (one authority says) "either entirely of metal or of wood, ornamented and secured with metal."

The vasa of the ancients were remarkable for the grace and beauty of their forms, and Pliny reminds us that, even in Numa's time, there was a guild of potters in Rome. The vasa varied from beautiful productions in terra-cotta and brass, and bronze, to vessels of amethyst and onyx, or of gold set with cameos or precious stones. The glass vessels of the ancients, as Becker says, "appear to throw all the skill of the English and Bohemian glass polishers completely into the shade." They had also the secret of making glass of differently coloured layers joined together, which they cut into cameos like the onyx. Curtains, brooms (" made of the branches of the wild myrtle"), sponges, oillamps (of exquisitely artistic designs, and made of terra-cotta, bronze, and marble), sun-dials, and water-clocks, were among the many useful articles of a Roman house. Libraries were then, as now, the ambition of many ignorant parcenus. The rolls of parchment were kept in cupboards called armaria, and slaves designated librarii were specially told off to transcribe, bind the rolls, and keep the library in good order. "The walls of Roman

houses," says Mr. Davenport Adams, "were adorned with a stucco of great excellence, equally adapted to receive pictorial embellishment, or to be modelled into bas-relief. This stucco was called albarium, from its whiteness, or opus marmoratum, from its resemblance to marble. It seems to have been made of calcined gypsum (plaster of Paris), mixed with pulverized stone; and in the more expensive sort, with powdered marble. A wall thus prepared was divided by the artist into rectangular compartments, which he filled with free and fanciful designs of landscapes, buildings, animals, gardens, or ideal subjects."

Our early northern domestic architecture and furniture were of an entirely different type to the Roman. To this day, however, the patio of a Spanish house, and the cortile of an Italian one, preserve the main features of the atrium, even to the fountain in the centre; and in mediæval times the great hall of a Saxon thane was to him what the atrium was to the Roman noble.

From the writings of Bede, and other chroniclers, we find that houses were built in England in early times of both stone and wood. Existing examples of Saxon masonry show that it was often ashlar or "clene hewen." The earth floors, as civilization advanced, gave place to wooden ones; and whereas distempered and frescoed walls were the rule in ancient classical houses, rough plaster covered with hangings prevailed in England. The first impetus to house decoration in our country may be said to have been given by women. As they gained skill and knowledge in needlework, they applied this beautiful art to the embellishment of their own homes. Matilda and her handmaidens worked the famous Bayeux tapestry in the eleventh century for a hall, and it contains what were intended for portraits of contemporaneous personages. A very artistic manufacture for domestic purposes was that of tiles. Although we have proof that in England the Romans used them for pavements in their villas, there is no testimony that the English copied Roman fashions in this respect. As coverings for roofs, and lining for fireplaces, they were extensively used in the Middle Ages; also for pavements in ecclesiastical structures. In the British Museum is an example of glazed decorative tiles applied to pavements, which came from the ruins of the Priory Church at Castle Acre, and is immensely old.

Wooden and timber-framed houses have been common in this country from the earliest period. The Romans used brick in their buildings here as elsewhere, yet the art of brick-making seems to have been lost for a period. One authority says: "In our numerous twelfth-century buildings no traces of brick occur, except in a few instances. The using them up as old material from buildings left by the Romans, as at Colchester and St. Albans, suggested making others in imitation. Perhaps the earliest true brick-building existing is that of Little Wenham Hall (1260). A few instances of early fourteenth-century brick-work occur, and in the fifteenth century it becomes common."

Castles were, as a rule, built more or less with a view to their becoming fortresses and refuges for the neighbouring villagers and retainers in time of war. We have so many good examples of ancient castles in England, of drawbridges, portcullises, and all the other characteristics belonging to them, that I should indeed lay myself open to the charge of repeating a twice-told tale were I to enlarge upon such a well-worn subject. We know from tradition that the stone or earth floors were strewn with rushes, that the walls often boasted tapestry, and that the tables and benches were simple in fashion. Carpets, like most other luxuries and refinements, came from the East, and they are mentioned in the Bible as used by persons "who dwell in tents." The Romans set great store by Babylonian carpets, and it is known that, even at this late date, towns bordering on the site of Babylon and Nineveh are remarkable for the beauty of their carpets. Wall-papers were also Eastern products, and came first from China and Japan. The oldest papers handed down to us are most beautiful in colouring and design; the ground being invariably white or cream, and the pattern large and conventionalized birds and flowers. The fashion of hanging walls with silk was too costly a one to find general acceptance.

Some idea of a Saxon thane's house may be gathered from the Harleian MSS. in the British Museum; and Sir Walter Scott, in "Ivanhoe," gives a vivid word-picture of the house of Cedric. As Norman civilization progressed, however, the rudeness of Saxon houses and furniture disappeared to a great measure; Litchfield, in his valuable book, "The Illustrated History of Furniture," says of this period: "Bedsteads were not usual except for

kings, queens, and great ladies; tapestry covered the walls, and the floors were generally sanded. As the country became more calm, and security for property more assured, this comfortless state of living disappeared. . . . Stairs were introduced into houses, the 'parlour' or talking-room was added, and fireplaces of brick or stone-work were made in some of the rooms, where previously the smoke was allowed to escape through an aperture in the roof. Bedsteads were carved and draped with rich hangings. Armoires made of oak, and enriched with carving, and presses date from about the end of the eleventh century." Panelling was first used for the walls of rooms in the reign of Henry III. About this time furniture followed the style of the architecture in vogue, and became distinctly Gothic, as we see in the Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey, which, as all the world knows, was made for King Edward I. In France, the fourteenth century was remarkable for the finish and beauty of its industrial arts. Litchfield quotes Lacroix's account of a chair made for the King of France in 1352, and which was of silver, incrusted with precious stones, and for which the Court silversmith received the sum of 774 louis. Forks came to us first from Italy, as did the fashion of decorated plaster-work for ceilings. In the old Tudor mansion, "Great Fulford," near Exeter, are to be seen choice specimens of plasterwork done by Italian workmen in the reign of Henry VIII. By the end of the fourteenth century the rude benches of Saxon times had developed into beautifully carved Gothic seats; the boxes then used for beds had been superseded by four posters, and fine linen sheets were in use in the houses of the rich. In France and Italy embroidered hangings of cloth of gold, velvet and silk, reached a point of magnificence never since surpassed.

The Renaissance may be said to have had its rise in Italy, and to have been a return to classic principles. The Palladian and Sansovinian palaces of Vicenza and Venice are good illustrations of Renaissance architecture applied to domestic purposes. Their furniture in great measure followed classic models. Who is not familiar with the Italian cabinet of pietra dura, in which miniature Corinthian or Doric brass pillars support a tiny entablature, behind which are flights of Liliputian steps leading to a classic doorway? Of this date, too, is the curule chair revival, and the magnifi-

cent cassone, or dower chest (often covered with gesso work and painted and gilt, or with simple panels, decorated in oils by the first artists of the day), was a favourite article of furniture at this and earlier periods in Italy. The Pitti Palace, in Florence, has many exquisite specimens of Italian Renaissance furniture, notably cabinets. intarsia and mosaic work developed in beauty of workmanship at this time. The choir stalls of a church in Perugia show some beautiful and genuinely old examples of intarsia work. Italian wood-carving has long been famous for its beauty; it is in higher relief than English carving, and the subjects are different and more artistically treated. The distinguishing characteristics of Renaissance carving were mythological subjects, wreaths, medallions, grape-vines, cornucopiæ and masks.

English Renaissance in architecture was not marked by the erection of sumptuous palaces such as the Rezzonico and Grimani. It took the form of the beautiful Tudor and Jacobean country house, a worthy successor to the battlemented fortress. Skilled workmen, most of them Italian artificers, were employed for the interior decoration of these houses. Francis I, had largely encouraged Italian artists to come to his capital and aid in its embellishment; and Henry VIII., not to be behindhand with his rival, gave ample encouragement to art also. The consequence was that artistic handicraft in England gained much from foreign sources. Notable examples of Italian work in intarsia and plaster are to be seen at Montacute House and Great Fulford, besides many other old English houses.

At a later period Inigo Jones introduced Italian classical domestic architecture into England; and he was mainly inspired in his career by admiration for the works of Palladio which he saw at Venice. A curious survival of the domestic classic exists in America, where temple-like façades of Doric pillars and pilasters, supporting architraves, friezes, and cornices carried out in the humble materials of wood and plaster, find much favour for houses under the term "Colonial." Vanbrugh, in the seventeenth century, followed in the footsteps of Inigo Jones, and Grinling Gibbons added to the beauty of English homes and churches by his inimitable carvings in wood and stone. Charles II. employed him in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and also in St. Paul's Cathedral; and he executed important work at Chatsworth and Hampton Court Palace.

In England at this time Chippendale was inaugurating as original a departure in furniture, as ever did Bonle in France. His designs in the beginning were almost exclusively Chinese in character. They were carried out in mahogany and rosewood, and were invariably without inlay. The carving was elaborate and rococo in style. Hepplewhite, who wrote a text-book on furniture, Ince, Mayhew, and Sheraton, were all more or less of the school of Chippendale; but Sheraton abandoned rococo carving for severe lines and marqueterie ornament. English marqueterie was never highly-coloured like the Dutch, nor did English workers in marqueterie delight in the reproduction of flowers.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century the brothers Adam rose into fame as decorators, and Flaxman, and Wedgwood, and Angelica Kaufmann thought it not beneath them to make our houses beautiful. Angelica Kaufmann remained in England seventeen years, and became one of the first members of the Royal Academy. During her stay she did a great deal of mural painting for Adams' houses. The beginning of the nineteenth century saw "empire" furniture in vogue, both in France and England. Litchfield dates its decline in favour from the date of the Restoration of Monarchy in France. Next succeeded a long period of absolute Philistinism in England. Houses, decoration and furniture, were equally tasteless and hideous. Art seemed at its lowest ebb. Chippendale and Sheraton treasures were banished to garrets to make room for the veriest atrocities in cabinetmaking, which were the fashion of the day. No more were seen the knife-boxes, the mahogany urns, the wine-coolers, and the mirrors which were associated with the skilled group of craftsmen of whom I have written. Carpets, hangings, and wall-papers were beneath the commonplace. Everything beautiful and of ancient design or workmanship was voted "old-fashioned" and condemned to the attics. The graceful delicacy of Sheraton forms was supplanted by ponderous and shapeless masses of wood without ornamentation of brass, buhl, carving, or inlay. Vivid green was the favourite colour, and woollen fringe finished off all upholstery. Art in the home could scarcely go lower, until the era of rubbish set in and showed us to what depths taste could descend. Early Victorian furniture and decoration might be heavy, and devoid of beauty and grace, but at least it was dignified and respectable. When the rubbish mania raged in England, solid mahogany was banished for the doubtful support of cheap wicker-work. Flimsy "art" muslins and silks beguiled the dust, and disguised the squareness, of honest rectangular doorways. Japanese fans tied up with ridiculous bows covered the walls. Valueless china plates were dotted about at every opportunity. Tea was served no longer on decent substantial mahogany; it made wicker-work to creak beneath the weight of travs, and cups and saucers. Frameless, dusty, begrimed photos stared at us from the backs of pianos, and littered mantel-pieces. Pampas-grass, and bulrushes, and peacocks' feathers, filled the air with downy atoms and dust. Wisps of "high art" silk "draped" everything. It was as if all corners and squareness were downright immoral. Sad coloured greens and blues covered with well-meaning, but hideous, crewel-work, formed the adornment of cushions and chairs. Rubbish, and dust, and dirt were at a premium. Severity, simplicity, cleanliness, and real beauty at a discount.

From this melancholy state of things the last ten years have largely delivered us. A purer, better taste prevails, severity is beginning to be appreciated, and people have at last discovered that Greek art was always rectangular. Little originality in industrial arts exists, but the exhibitions at the New Gallery have given an impetus to what there is, and helped to educate and improve the popular taste. The china-plate mania has been relegated to lodging-houses, and really beautiful and valuable specimens of pottery and porcelain are preserved in cabinets as of old. Walls are cleaner and more reposeful to look at, denuded of their dusty draperies and dirty fans. It is to be hoped that this improvement in taste may herald the advent of better things, and that the arts and crafts of Old England may flourish and make our houses beautiful as they did of yore.

> "Beauty is truth, truth beauty—that is all Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

FREAKS OF FASHION.

By R. BROWN-PAYNTER.

THOSE persons who are aggrieved by the extravagant vagaries of modern fashions are entitled to all the comfort they can derive from the fact that their grievance is not a new one. The sight of others' burdens helps us to bear our own with equanimity, and the long-suffering husbands and fathers who groan beneath the weight of dressmakers' bills for their wives and daughters may submit to the imposition with greater resignation when they learn that their forefathers were similarly troubled. Such appears to have been the case from very early times, for at a very remote period in our national history Parliament found it necessary, or thought it wise, to step in and curb the excesses of the women of the period in the matter of dress. Statutes were passed forbidding the wearing of dresses of a more expensive kind than those which the legislature thought fitting and proper. Such legislation was probably futile-it was certainly what we should call grandmotherlybut the fact that it was thought to be desirable proves-and the fact is confirmed by other circumstances-that a tendency, nowadays so strong, to lavish extravagant outlay on dress is not a weakness peculiar to the women of the nineteenth century. Their ancestors, like themselves the daughters of Eve, were equally subject to that craving for display which some philosophers attribute to the love of the beautiful so strong in the female sex, and which others, more cynical, but, perhaps, nearer the truth, attribute to the incurable vanity of all Eve's daughters.

It has been said that the rage for rich and costly clothing came in with the Normans. Undoubtedly the Normans did a great deal of mischief, but of this charge they must be acquitted. They may have introduced new forms by which the love of rich and costly dress could be manifested, but the love of display of which their rich attire was the outcome, and which the plunder of the vanquished race enabled them to indulge, was, unless one's ideas of human nature are mistaken, as deeply rooted in the vanquished as in the victors. The weakness was not in former days, any more than it is now, confined to any one class, but per-

meated every layer of the social strata, thus proving in a conclusive manner, that it is not wealth or station, but similarity of tastes and desires, that brings high and low to a common level.

Parliament became alarmed at the extravagance in the matter of dress of the ladies of the time, and set about exercising its power to check an evil which could not fail to be detrimental to the prosperity and wellbeing of the commonwealth. In 1563 an Act was passed which dealt with the subject of dress in a very effective manner. was enacted that no person should wear a more expensive dress than the wisdom of the legislature, as embodied in the Act, considered fitting to their position in the social scale. The community was divided into classes, and the maximum price of a dress for members of each class was rigidly fixed. By this method every woman was enabled to obtain as good a dress as other women of her own class, while she was debarred from endeavouring to dress so well as the class above her, and protected from the humiliation of seeing herself no better dressed than the class beneath her. Lest there should be any difficulty in complying with the provisions of the Act, the clothiers were compelled to make sufficient clothes, at the specified prices, to meet the demand. This wise and thoughtful provision must have softened, to some extent, the operation of a law which the ladies must have looked upon as harsh and tyrannical, although it may have been regarded in an entirely different light by their husbands.

It was not merely in the costliness of their attire that our forefathers and mothers exceeded the bounds of moderation, but also in the fashion of their garments. The fickleness of fashion is a byword, but nothing can be more fickle than fashion; and fashions then, as now, took strange forms. Strutt says, that towards the close of the fifteenth century, the dress of the English was exceedingly fanciful, in so much that it was even difficult to distinguish one sex from the other.

France then held, as it still holds, the premier place as the leader and dictator of fashion, and there aiready complaints were rife as to the extravagance and absurdity of dress. Soon afterwards

Madame de Maintenon introduced flounces, which at once became the rage in all the varieties of plait and slash and puff; and this new form of extravagance was severely satirised, in common with those that had existed before, one writer so far forgetting, in the wrath with which the innovation filled him, the natural gallantry of his countrymen, declared that "The Parisian ladies only invent fashions to conceal their defects." One disadvantage of our contiguity to the gay city was that whatever "came out" new in Paris was quickly brought across the Channel and adopted by the people who led the fashion in London. Englishmen and Frenchmen, like good neighbours, became companions in suffering all the pains that the autocratic decrees of la mode could inflict, and these were not few or trivial.

For instance, English and French ladies in the eighteenth century affected most extraordinary styles of head-dress. The Parisian ladies delighted to wear a coiffure called the Loge d'Opera, which, in its alarming height, must have been prophetic of the great tower which now stands on the field of Mars. From the top to the tip of the chin of the wearer was a distance of seventy-two inches. This aspiring structure was formed in three zones, each parted in a different way. The pouf coiffure, not quite so high, but equally prevalent, was a heterogenous composition of feathers, jewellery, ribbons, and pins, into which butterflies, birds, painted cupids, branches of trees, and even vegetables, were introduced. There was also a sentimental pouf. The Duchess de Chartres appeared at the Opera in one of these, and it must have been an imposing affair, although it would perhaps be more conducive to a mirthful than a sentimental state of mind in the beholders. Upon it was represented her eldest son in his nurse's arms, a parrot pecking at a cherry, and a little negro boy! This latter "property" calls to mind another "freak of fashion" of that period, which consisted in great ladies keeping a negro boy, just as in our day they find delight in being accompanied by and fondling poodles.

The sentimental coiffure was not alone in its eccentricity. There were coiffures representing landscapes, English gardens, mountains, and forests, and to such lengths, in a literal sense, was the fashion carried, that at last the police interfered,

preventing the appearance at the theatre of ladies whose head-dress would obstruct the view of those behind them.

The "commode" coiffure is the English counterpart of the French Loge d'Opera and other monstrosities. So high was it worn, that fashionable ladies were obliged, in travelling, to lean out of their coaches, being willing, such is the power of fashion over its votaries, to make themselves ludicrous, in the eyes even of their contemporaries, in order to obey its decrees. There is indisputable evidence to prove that the "commode" was equal in height to the stature of the wearer. A contemporary lady writes-"On my head a huge commode was sticking which made me appear as tall again." This statement, if alone, might be suspected of a tinge of feminine exaggeration, were it not supported by others, among them being one by that famous essavist and shrewd observer, Addison, who, in one of his essays, written when the fashion was going out, speaks of "the number of ladies who were formerly seven feet high, but who now want some inches of four." Much might be written about the fashions of our own times, but here we tread on delicate ground, and it must suffice to say that when reading of, and feeling inclined to laugh at, the fashionable follies of our predecessors we should do well to bear in mind the adage which prescribes the proper course of conduct for those who live in glass houses.

That female charms, strong when merely natural, prove irresistibly bewitching when art is summoned to the aid of nature, we see abundantly proved every day; and the ruler of France, in 1770, promulgated this edict for the protection of his male subjects: "Whosoever by means of red or white paint, perfumes, essence, artificial teeth, false hair, cotton wool, iron corsets, shoes with high heels, or false hips, shall seek to entice into the bond of matrimony any male subject of his Majesty, shall be prosecuted for witchcraft, and declared incapable of matrimony!" One can only imagine what an outery there would be if such an edict were promulgated now, either in England or in France. How seriously it would, were it put in force, affect the matrimonial prospect of many a "maiden fair to see," is known by no one, and can only be surmised by the high priests of the mysteries of artificial aids to beauty.



AUTHORS' COUNTIES.

III.-WARWICKSHIRE: GEORGE ELIOT.

BY GEORGE MORLEY.

IVING, like the fair Rosalind, on the skirts of the Forest of Arden, it is natural that George Eliot, with but few exceptions, should have depicted in her novels the rural charms of the scenes by which her early life was environed. A more excellent groundwork for fictional display than the surroundings of the little hamlet of Griff, immured in greenwood and far from the busy haunts of town life, could not well be imagined.

The northern portion of Warwickshire is known as "The Woodland," the south as "The Feldon." North of the classic Avon the face of the country is thickly studded with the sered and now wasting remnants of what was really the Forest of Arden in which Shakespeare laid the scenes of his idyllic compositions. Almost in the centre of this scene, in the "Valley of the Miry Den," from which the ancient village of Meriden takes its name, there is a plantation called Hawke's Wood. Proceeding through the charming avenue of this wood, by way of Astley Lodge, the lover of Nature's nooks will come to a small farm-house of one bay, with a

gabled east wing, coated with rough cast; as sweet and pleasant a homestead as the eye could delight in.

This is South Farm. Under this pastoral roof-tree, Mary Ann Evans, the future George Eliot, was born, on November 22nd, 1819. While yet an infant, however, she was removed to Griff House, a large brick building, standing in its own grounds, overlooking Arbury Park, and then forming part of the estates of Sir Roger Newdigate, the intimate friend of Sir Horace Walpole, and the amateur architect of Arbury Hall.

Amid the scenes of rural life embraced in this picture, intersected with coal-mines and clumps of woodland, George Eliot grew up into maidenhood; and here it is, that, with the hand of a gifted writer, she has laid the foundations of her most successful fictions.

And not only has she described with the hand, as it were, of an idyllic Dugdale, many of the sweetest and serenest scenes of a beautiful country, but she has transferred to her pages the simple rugged dwellers in those scenes; their traits

of character, their personal appearance, their aspirations, and their dialect. Not that George Eliot loved the rustics among whom she was born, and whom she so cleverly canonised in her books. There is, I think, a suspicion that she had a mild contempt for the rustic as a human being; for in a criticism called "Silly Novels," written by her in The IVestminster Review of October, 1856, she thus expresses herself :- "The slow gaze, in which no sense of beauty beams, no humour twinkles; the slow utterance, and the

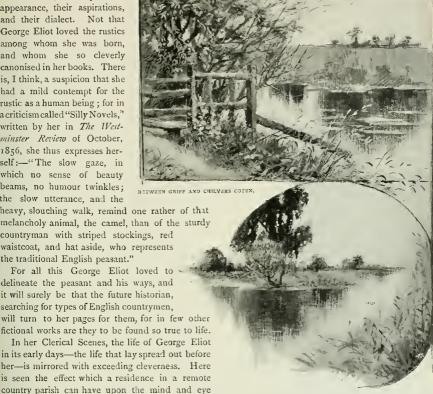
heavy, slouching walk, remind one rather of that melancholy animal, the camel, than of the sturdy countryman with striped stockings, red waistcoat, and hat aside, who represents

the traditional English peasant."

For all this George Eliot loved to delineate the peasant and his ways, and it will surely be that the future historian, searching for types of English countrymen, will turn to her pages for them, for in few other

In her Clerical Scenes, the life of George Eliot in its early days—the life that lay spread out before her-is mirrored with exceeding cleverness. Here is seen the effect which a residence in a remote country parish can have upon the mind and eye of a close observer. Her first "Scene," bearing the title of "The Sad Fortunes of the Reverend Amos Barton," is a foretaste of the store of material, founded upon personal experience of the scenes and persons described, which she had garnered up during her life at Griff.

One mile northward from Griff House, through a leafy, narrow lane, or "chewer," as the rustics themselves call it-a lane which figures happily in the pages of "Felix Holt, the Radical"-is the small coal-bound village of Chilvers Coten. That village had many pleasant associations for George Eliot. She was baptised there by the Reverend Bernard Gilpin Ebdell, B.A., on the 29th of November, 1819-seven days after her birthday. It was also the church at which the Evans family



ON THE AVON, NEAR STONELEIGH.

were regular attendants. This is the "Shepperton Church" of the "Scenes of Clerical Life."

In the large square pew allotted to the occupants of Griff House, George Eliot, when a little girl, "was," to use her own words, "so crude a member of the congregation that my nurse found it necessary to provide for the reinforcement of my devotional patience by smuggling bread-and-butter into the sacred edifice." Perhaps it was during those periods of comfortable ministration to her internal requirements that the embryo novelist paid so careful a regard to the seating accommodation of the church. "No benches in those days," she writes, "but huge, roomy pews, around which devoted church-goers sat during 'lessons' trying to



ASTLEY CHURCH. COTEN CHURCH.

shadow I sank with a sense of retirement through the Litany, only to feel with more intensity my

burst into the conspicuousness of public life when I was made to stand up on the seat during the psalms or the singing."

The "Shepperton Church" of to-day is not so widely different from the church so fondly described by George Eliot. It is true the restorer has from time to time plied his calling there, but not with such ill effect as in some Warwickshire sanctuaries. In many respects, therefore, the church with the "little flight of steps, with their wooden rail running up the outer wall and leading to the school children's gallery," is the same as when Amos Barton and the gentle Milly lived at the Vicarage.

Perhaps, however, the object of the greatest interest to admirers of the novelist is the memorial tablet on the wall of the south aisle: "Sacred to the memory of Bernard Gilpin Ebdell, B.A., forty-two years' resident vicar of this parish. He died August 6th, 1828, aged 66 years. Also of Sarah, wife of Bernard Gilpin Ebdell. She died November 21st, 1823."

The real attraction of this tablet lies in the fact that Mr. and Mrs. Ebdell are the originals of the leading characters in "Mr. Gilfil's Love Story"—the second of George Eliot's Clerical Scenes. Mr. Ebdell stood as the model for Mr. Gilfil, and his wife for that of the luckless Caterina. There was also the element of romance in their lives which the novelist has so faithfully portrayed in the story.

Before her marriage with the Vicar of Chilvers Coten in 1801, Mrs. Ebdell was Sally Shilton, daughter of a collier in the village. Possessed of an attractive person and a beautiful voice,

the childless Lady Newdigate, the second wife of Sir Roger, had her brought up at Arbury Hall, and her voice cultivated. The incident of Captain Wybrow in "Mr. Gilfil's Love Story" may, to a large extent,

be fictional, but the descriptions are said to be accurate, and the materials for the story may have been gleaned by George Eliot from her father, Robert Evans, who, during Mr. Ebdell's tenure as Vicar of "Shepperton"

Church, was land steward to Sir Roger Newdigate.

In the composition of her Clerical Scenes, George Eliot drew more largely upon the life and landscapes of Warwickshire than in any of her other books. The simple pictures of the villages and the small towns with their quiet old churches, appealed strongly to the antiquarian tastes within her. The lumbering farm-houses, the quaint inns and wayside cots, so admirably described in "Silas Marner," together with the halls and manors of the great people, were a joy to her. Thus in her books, combining the historian with the novelist, she has faithfully pictured the ecclesiastical and manorial buildings of that part of Warwickshire which gave her birth, and the face of which she so carefully studied.

Having described Chilvers Coten and its church under the name of "Shepperton," George Eliot turned her attention to the ancient and historical church at Astley, a few miles south of Arbury Park. No doubt the history of Astley Church and Castle fascinated her virile imagination. Implanted deep in the thickness of the Forest of Arden, both castle and church had, during the Civil Wars, been the scene of martial exploits, the church itself being for some time the garrison of Cromwell's soldiery.

The Rev. Mr. Burton, Vicar of Fillongley, a parish adjacent to Astley, in the time of the Protectorate, wrote the following curious account of "The Ruin and Fall of ye Steeple at Astley":—

"That ye church being built in ye form of a cross had a very faire steeple in the midst, with a high spire covered with lead, which was so eminent in these woodland parts, that it was called Ye Lantern of Arden—being such a

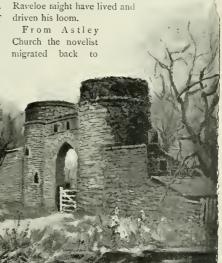
guide to passengers. But this, with the lead also which covered

ye church, was sacrilegiously taken away

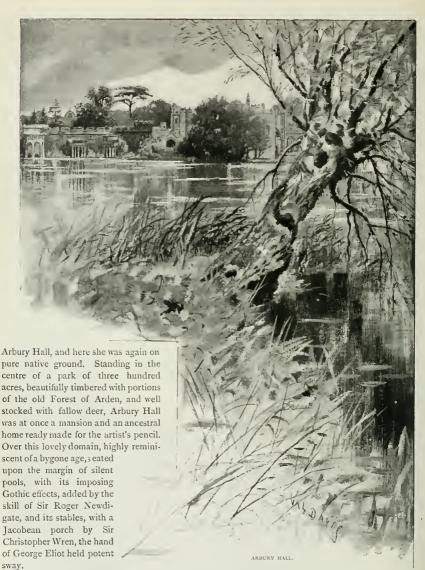
and sold by Adrian Hope, w h o married ye Duchess of Suffolk; so that by ye means of wet, ye steeple came to decay, and about ye year 1600 fell, and therein a great part of ye church."

Astley Church is the "Knebley Church" of "Mr. Gilni's Love Story." All the historical lore of the edifice was well known to George Eliot. Though Vicar of Chilvers Coten, Mr. Ebdell officiated at Astley on Sunday afternoons. "He rode hastily, with the other (hand) in his pocket, to Knebley, where he officiated in a wonderful little church, with a checkered pavement, which had once rung to the iron tread of military monks, with coats of arms in clusters on the lofty roof, marble warriors and their wives without noses occupying a large portion of the area, and the twelve apostles with their heads very much on one side, holding didactic ribbons painted in fresco on the walls."

Such is George Eliot's correct description of the interior of "The Lantern of Arden," the quaint little Astley Church, perched upon a hill about a mile from Arbury, overlooking the picturesque Astley Castle, with its mullioned windows, and walls partly covered with ivy, and the great tract of country embracing "The Woodland" of Warwickshire; where, in any one of the isolated cottages dotted here and there, the Weaver of



NORTH ENTRANCE TO ARBURY HALL ("CHEVEREL MANOR")



It is the "Cheverel Manor" of her Clerical Scenes. Not only has she minutely described the interior of the Hall, to which she had constant access, through the confidential position on the estate held by her father, Robert Evans, but under the names of Sir Christopher and Lady Cheverel, she



Situated in the heart of the wood-

land it is not a subject for surprise that old-world customs should cling to the venerable pile known as Arbury Hall, the erstwhile seat of Augustinian monks. One singular feature in the domestic arrangements at the Hall is that for a long period a drum has been used for the purpose of calling the inmates to the table. It is suggested that this curious custom was imported to Arbury Hall in the latter part of the seventeenth century, from Blithdale Hall, Rugeley, the seat of Lord Bagot, where a similar practice prevails, by Mary, daughter of Sir Edward Bagot, and first wife of the second Sir Richard Newdigate.

The third of the Scenes of Clerical Life in which George Eliot has exhibited such purely Warwickshire characteristics, takes the reader no greater distance afield than three miles to the east of Arbury. "Janet's Repentance," the most dramatic of the three "Scenes," deals with phases of domestic life in the small country town of Milby. This "Milby" is the ancient town of Nuneaton, so named from the Convent of Nunne-Eaton, founded there, and richly endowed by Robert, Earl of Leicester, in the reign of King Stephen. It is a typical Warwickshire town, full of old-world suggestions, and at the date of George Eliot's story, and now, to some extent, busily occupied with the industries of ribbon weaving, and hat and glove making.

In Church Street, Nuneaton, there was to be seen "an old-fashioned house with an overhanging upper storey. Outside it had a face of rough stucco, and

casement windows with green panes and shutters; inside it was full of long passages and rooms with low ceilings."

That was the residence of Jauet Dempster, and it exists there to this day. On Thursday, October 25th, 1894, this house of "Lawyer Dempster," was said by a pretion by Messre Sands.

October 25th, 1894, this house of "Lawyer Dempster" was sold by auction by Messrs. Sands & Son, of Nuneaton, for £2,302, the purchaser being Mr. W. Nowell, manager of Sir Alfred Hickman's collieries at Stockingford—the "Paddiford" of the Clerical Scenes.

Though the pictures of country life so charmingly described by George Eliot in her masterpiece, "Adam Bede," are not, strictly speaking, Warwickshire scenes—at least, not all of them—"Hayslope" being the lovely village of Ellastone, in Staffordshire, on the banks of the Dove, they are still all so much like the scenes of the novelist's own immediate neighbourhood, that they have the impression of being composite creations.

"The Hall Farm" of Martin Poyser is undoubtedly a Warwickshire scene. It is to be found at the little secluded village of Corley, a short distance from Arbury Hall, and forming part of the possessions of the Newdigate family. The house consists of a central block with gabled projecting wings in the style of the sixteenth century. In front there is an Elizabethan garden enclosed by a brick wall, the entrance gate being flanked by a griffin "sejant guardant" on each post. On the north-west side are several fine walnut-trees, the remains of "the grand double



SILAS MARNER'S COTTAGE.

row of walnut-trees on the right of the enclosure," mentioned in "Adam Bede." Here one may see in fancy the dainty figure of Hetty Sorrel, "standing on little pattens," surveying the mead for a

From the quaint in-Arden village of "Shepperton" to the cottage of Silas Marner in "Raveloe," for which any of the out-of-the-way hamlets surrounding Griff might easily have stood; through all the scenes at Knebley, at Milby, at the Hall Farm, at the comfortable "Rainbow" at Raveloe, right to the Red Deeps in "The Mill on the Floss," George Eliot has performed, with unerring fidelity, the combined art of Warwickshire novelist and topographist. It is no wonder it should be so. Within a very small ring of the scene which gave birth to George Eliot, were born three such magicians of the pen as Michael Drayton, William Shakespeare, and Walter Savage Landor; Drayton at Hartshill, but a few miles north of Nuneaton, in 1563; Shakespeare at Stratford-on-Avon, south of the Forest of Arden, in 1564; and Landor at the Elizabethan town of Warwick in 1775; and George Eliot is a fitting appendage to the three.

Nor should Richard Jago, the poet of "Edge

Hill," be omitted from the list of illustrious writers, who, born in George Eliot's neighbourhood, should not disdain to admit her to their company. He was born at Beaudesert, in the very heart of the Forest of Arden, in 1715, and died and was buried at Snitterfield, in 1781—a Warwickshire writer, intimately familiar, as a country parson of Beaudesert and Snitterfield, with the scenes so felicitously described in the novels of George Eliot.

That George Eliot should have devoted her talents to, and won her greatest success almost exclusively with, rural scenes, need occasion no surprise. She was born in Nature's heart, in a scene of natural beauty which had probably few parallels in the whole of Merrie England; and, like Shakespeare, she drew her scenes and characters from the store laid out before her with such a prodigal hand. In a country where, as stated by Elton in his "Origins of English History," even in modern times, a squirrel might leap from tree to tree for nearly the entire length of the shire, it was but meet that a writer of imagination, like George Eliot, should make it her first care to produce in literature the natural charms of her native land.

"If stationary men (and women) would pay some attention to the districts on which they reside, and would publish their thoughts respecting the objects that surround them, from such materials might be drawn the most complete county histories."

Thus wrote Gilbert White in the first edition of "The Natural History of Selborne," and this, evidently, was the opinion of George Eliot. In the pleasing form of fiction she has, in her

"Scenes of Clerical
Life," furnished material of the highest
utility to the writer of
county history. She has done even more
than that. She has painted pictures of
country manners in Warwickshire at the
commencement of the nineteenth century
which will prove of great value to the Dugdale of the
future, and for which she will rank high among

And there is yet room in Warwickshire for more Walter Scots, Nathaniel Hawthornes, Washington Irvings, and George Eliots. A county in which almost each noble mansion or venerable ruin, from the princely Warwick Castle to the rugged relics of Kenilworth, carries with it a romance and a history, ought to possess the greatest attraction for the wielder of the pen of romance who can produce a "Kenilworth," or the more quiet, though not less important, writer, who finds a message in the creation of "Scenes of Clerical Life."

those few English novelists who have not made

fiction merely a vehicle of amusement.

HOLLY AND HAWTHORN.

By Mrs. Caumont.

Part I.



WAS a tax-collector in those days down in one of the midland counties, and was well acquainted with old John Drury and Mrs. Drury, whose name, if I remember aright, was "Jane." They were a nice old couple. They lived alone, and kept a small "drapery," and every time I went to town I was sure to see the face

of one or other looking out from behind the counter in that neat little shop at the corner of Bridge Street and Bishop's Alley: his with the clean-shaven, pointed chin and horn spectacles; and hers—a bonnie little, young old-woman's face, pale, but all smiles, and set off with crimpled, greyish hair, and little grey curls folded in at the sides of her frilled muslin cap.

I learned all about old John and Jane Drury first from their next-door neighbour. It was Mrs. Cargill, the bonnet-maker, who told me of the trouble they had had when their only son, Johnny—"little Johnny" he was called—went wrong, and died abroad; and how, at times, the old woman still fretted, but John Drury "durs'nt hear his name mentioned." I felt for the old pair; especially as I knew, long before anybody else, that affairs in the little shop didn't march very brilliantly; in short, that they had money difficulties.

It was coming near Christmas time; and all along Bishop's Alley and Bridge Street, and right up to the Cotton Market, the shop windows on either side had extra lights flaring, and new Christmas wares arranged in bright, gay colours to attract the notice of the passers-by. Groups of children moved from one to the other; and, now and again, dived inside to spend their pocket-money. But at "Drury's corner" all was the same as at any other season. The little old house wore its own staid, respectable appearance; but no young eyes stared into the broad, low window.

The glass door was closed to keep out the draught, and remained closed the greater part of the day.

"Jane," said old John, "I don't think, somehow, that we have quite so many customers as we used to have. And yet we are as attentive to our business as before."

"That's true," returned the old woman, faintly. "Time was, we were making more."

"Why, Jane, we are not making at all at present. It's losing we are. Do you know, woman, who was in the shop this morning, the only individual that crossed the threshold? Just Clincher, the rate-collector, for the fourth time."

"Goodness gracious! And what did you say, John?"

"Well, I simply told him he must call again, for we really hadn't the money at hand."

"And what did he say?"

"Why, he said he would give us grace; but only because he was acquainted with us, and all that—'respite' was the word—until the first of January; but that, of course, it was highly irregular to let it run on into the New Year. And, of course, if it wasn't forthcoming on the first, then proceedings must be taken against us. What do you think of that, Jane? That's a nice look-out for New Year's Day."

"Lord have mercy upon us," ejaculated the old woman.

"Now my opinion is," persisted doggedly the old man, "that when the 'first' comes round, we'll be as far off paying that money as we are this minute. To say nothing of the rent, which is likewise six months overdue."

"Oh, hush, John dear! Something must be done. We have still the shop to our backs; and I don't see why it shouldn't keep us, as it has done all these years. Perhaps, John, we don't have variety enough to please the customers? You know, fashions change, and novelties come in—at least, so Mrs. Cargill says."

"Let Mrs. Cargill mind her own business," cried old John, testily. "We have now what we always had, the useful articles, such as sensible people

require. I'm not talking of Christmas flimsies, but the staple goods, that are in demand all the year round."

"Indeed, yes," said Jane, "nobody has better merino, nor green baize, nor twilled calico than we have."

"Nor cheaper corset-steels and button forms," responded John, "to say nothing of the hooks-and-eyes and carpet slippers."

"And all the inside soles," returned Jane, "that old Mr. Hobbledehoy made us 'lay in' when he had the lumbago,"

They were sitting all this time in the little back parlour by the fire-side, waiting for the kettle to boil; and now their dialogue was interruped by sundry coughings and whisperings from the direction of the shop.

"There!" gasped old Jane, laying her hand on her husband's arm.

Very soon the horn-rimmed spectacles appeared behind the counter, and confronted the merry countenances of four blooming young girls, whispering and munching sweetmeats. Only one appeared anxious to purchase; and when old Mr. Drury repeated, "What can I serve you to, ma'am?" she inquired, "Have you any filoselle?"

"Filoselle—fil-o-selle? I'm blest if I know what that is! No, ma'am, we don't keep filoselle. I daresay you might get it at the apothecary's over the way. Anything else, ma'am?"

"Nothing more this evening," returned the young stranger in gay accents; and then she and her companions, all laughing and chatting, and casting amused glances at old John, disappeared, leaving the door open, and an icy blast of December air stealing in behind them.

"Filoselle, fil-o-selle? Filoselle? What's that, Jane? As if we would keep filoselle! Some 'pothecary's stuff, I warrant. Anyhow, I forwarded them to Dr. Garlic's for it."

"O, John! Filoselle at the apothecary's!" cried Mrs. Drury. And then she fell to laughing, till, as she herself declared, she wasn't fit to hold the tea-pot.

"Why, man dear," she continued, gently wiping her eyes, and composing herself again, "don't you know filoselle's just one of those novelties Mrs. Cargill referred to. So we may jot down filoselle now against the day the Nottingham man comes round. Folk must live up to the times, you know. I

declare, man, the ladies would take you for an old fool, for sending them to Dr. Garlic's for filoselle!"

"There, there, we'll let the filoselle drop," retorted old John, beginning to wax wroth.

Just at this instant there was to be discovered a tapping of coppers against the panelling, and, this time, Mrs. Drury herself sprang up to answer the summons. "What are you wanting, dear?" she asked of a little curly-headed urchin, whose blue eyes reached the level of the counter.

"If you please, and father has sent me for three-pennyworth of stamps."

"Well, I must look, honey, and see whether we have any or not. John, where's the key of your desk? Here's Job Cotter's little boy seeking stamps."

Old John uttered a deep groan from the back apartment, and then called out: "The desk is open, and there are just three stamps left. We have no use for them, so give them. But let him tell Job Cotter that the General Post Office is the shop folk usually buy stamps in!"

"John, dear, don't be down," said old Jane, returning to her husband. "The customers will be in by-and-bye. At this time of the year they always do drop in towards evening."

"If they don't arrive soon, we may give up shop, Jane," repeated Mr. Drury. "I see it coming; as sure—as sure as the old year goes out and the new year comes in, you and I are going to be bankrupts."

As he uttered the words the little glass door was again on the swing, and this time two old maiden ladies entered. They both began to speak at once, in an exceedingly high key to John Drury and his wife, who had rushed together to the front to meet, as they supposed, a double demand on their business. "We want—we want," screamed the two ladies in a breath, "to know if you can accommodate us—accommodate us with the change of half-a-crown—half-a-crown?"

This was too much. Old John looked at old Jane, and old Jane looked at old John, both aghast; and at last it was Mrs. Drury who faltered out, "I'm sure I'm very sorry, ladies, but we haven't it in the house at present."

The two customers turned on their heels, and stalked away, and the old couple overheard the one say to the other, "Come, sister, we shouldn't have tried in such an insignificant shop."

And now old Jane's eyes followed her husband

in dismay. "You see who was right," he was muttering.

"Something must be done," thought she, "at once."

"I say, John dear," she cried, joyfully, as one who had found a long-lost treasure, "I have it. We'll not be beaten, you and I, though we aren't so young as we were. We'll just put up the shutters here for to-night, and take a kind of holiday to ourselves. And do you know what we'll do? We'll toddle round and look at the other folks' windows, and find out what their trick is. And I guess, what others can do we can do. We're not going to be left behind-hand."

And then the brave, little old woman, smiling and nodding her head, and stamping about to show that she was in earnest, fetched old John the four painted wooden shutters, and stood by him while he fastened them up. She ran, like some young girl on the alert for an escapade, to bring old John his woollen muffler and faded top-coat, and then his knitted gloves. And ere he had one of these garments adjusted, she was there before him in a twinkling, with her moth-eaten muff and boa, and blue-hooded cloak.

"Now we're for round the shop windows like the rest of the folk, only we are going to 'get a wrinkle' at the same time."

Away they trudged, this old couple, arm-in-arm, right up the whole of Bridge Street, as far as the Cotton Market, and back again round by Bishop's Alley, with the sleet beating in their colourless, time-worn cheeks.

At the corner of the immense plate-glass front of Larkin and Larkin's Wholesale and Retail Grocery, and quite behind a score of prentice-boys and factory girls, artisans and housekeepers, might be seen these two faces, the eyes with the horn-rimmed spectacles, and the bright, little, glistening, hazel eyes, into which the night wind waved a curly lock of faded hair. They peered intently in at the great wheel, in perpetual motion, grinding coffee as if by magic; at the array of oranges, and the jets of gas running along the lower ledge of the windows, like the footlights of the pantomime.

"Eh, John, but look at that green moss round the oranges, and the holly-berries and the mistletoe, and those dainty little baskets tied up with coloured ribbons." "All that doesn't apply to our case," answered old John, with a sneer.

"Ah, but it does though—partly," returned the little woman, briskly.

By-and-bye the two elderly forms might have been discerned standing out of a flock of tiny young-sters, planted before the big toy-shop in the Cotton Market.

"They have a real little Christmas-tree with lighted tapers in there," exclaimed old Jane, holding up her hands. "Well, I declare I never saw the like! Indeed, John. I'm right glad we came out this evening. Why, man, it's far behind the times are are!"

"We couldn't copy that, anyhow," asserted old John, trying to draw his wife away.

"Not unless we had thought of it sooner," was the reply. "But we can do something, John. It wants one day of Christmas yet, and suppose we were to decorate. "Tisn't a bit too late for that, and who knows, it might just be the turning-point to our hard times. The hard times they are with us, I acknowledge."

"Anyhow," she continued, speaking in a gayer tone again, "I know where there's a bit of real holly to he got. Do you remember that last Sunday we had a walk together, John, after church? If you recollect, we went away up the country road as far as Singleton's front gate, and then we turned up the narrow lane that runs off and joins the Nottingham Road further along. Well, in that lane, John, I spied a holly hedge, and I know there are berries on it now. And to-morrow morning, John, whilst you are taking down the shutters, and sweeping up the shop for the day, I'll skip out as far as Singleton Lane, and fetch the berries, and we'll have our little Christmas show, John, like the rest of them. Nay, if I wake early, perhaps I'll go the very first thing, before its right daylight, and ere anyone is about in the street."

* * * *

As the tardy winter morning began to dawn, Abel Burroughs, the gardener and general out-of-doors factotum at Singleton Lodge, was smoking quietly on his own threshold at the side entrance gate-house. His attention became suddenly aroused by a sort of pulling and jerking movement, visible in the thick hedge straight opposite him. There were voices, too, which fell on his ear as something curious at that early hour of the day.

"We must give it up, Jane. It's too high for me, and, of course, too high for you."

"Try with the crook-end of your stick, John, dear, and if that won't reach it, then I'm fain to go in and ask for it."

These were not the voices of any mischievous school-children, as Abel at first conceived, but those of a respectable-looking man and woman, as he now ascertained, having walked round and confronted Mr. and Mrs. Drury.

"I beg your pardon, sir," began old John, "but my missus has set her heart on some of your hollyberries there. She was for coming alone this morning, but I heard her start, and thought I had better come with her, as we mostly work together, my missus and 1."

"Well, you needn't be tearing the hedges to bits like that!" was Abel's rejoinder. "Leaves lightsome; and the berries are to be had for the asking! Only it isn't decent-like to come trying to injure the property, a-tearing down the hedges, and mourning in the house."

"Why, who's dead, my good man?" inquired Mrs. Drury. "Not any of the Singleton family, surely?"

"There was no family, but just my lady herself, old Mrs. Singleton; and she dropped down dead the day before yesterday, when she was sitting reading the newspaper. The funeral is to be on Christmas Day."

"My! how sad! And how old was she when she died?"

"Sixty-seven," returned old Abel.

"Why, John, just my age," responded Mrs. Drury. "Dear! how strange."

"And Mr. Singleton," began old John, abruptly; "he that built the almshouses; he's to the fore still, of course?"

"No," said Abel; "master, he died in harvest, just three months before my lady. And, they say, she has never been the same thing since. Now they're both gone, you may say, together; and the house and grounds here are to be sold, they tell me, once affairs are wound up. In the meantime, I'm to stay on and look after things."

"There's a pretty garden," remarked old Mrs. Drury, peeping wistfully in towards a long alley that began at the porter's lodge and reached away till it was lost in a vista of evergreen foliage. "It must be really nice here in the summer-time."

"And about the almshouses," commenced old John again, "that Mr. Singleton built—how many did he build?"

"Three, to be sure, you see them from the Nottingham Road, if you care to go that length."

"Three! Only three," repeated old John, slowly; "and is there often a vacancy?"

"Oh, yes," said Abel; "every now and again there'll be one of them empty. One was vacant a little while ago, when widow Demsey died."

After this, Abel Burroughs placed an immense bunch of green holly, covered with thick clusters of scarlet berries, in Mrs. Drury's hand. The old couple wished him "Good day," and directed their footsteps towards town.

* * * * *

That day the little shop with the low broad window and the "step down," at the corner of Bridge Street, flourished a great bunch of green and scarlet holly, as well as a display of bright red flannel and tartan merino; and, when it grew towards evening, half-a-dozen lighted candles, as a final attempt at enticing the public.

Poor old John and Jane Drury!—I suppose they were really too late in commencing their operations, for it turned out that not a single customer made his appearance; and Christmas Day itself arrived.

It was a sad, lonely day for the old couple in their reduced circumstances. They had no dainties prepared, nor any visitors, nor relations calling in; the very neighbours forgot about them, each being occupied with his own family concerns on that day. The hours seemed to drag by heavily and wearily, and more silently than at any other time with John and his wife.

At last the two sat together by the fire over a cup of weak tea, without any cream or sugar; and it was the old man that spoke first. "As I said, dear, I saw this all coming, and now something must be done."

" What, John?"

"Why, we must apply for one of those almshouses, Jane; and at once too, before *that* is too late. I think they would surely give *us* the preference, Jane, if we went about the thing without delay?"

Mrs. Drury did not answer, and no word was spoken at all for a long time. At last, rising to seek his light and go to bed, old John exclaimed in a bitter tone, "So this was our Merry Christmas! Who knows where we'll both be when the next comes round!"

"Oh, hush, husband! I can't bear to hear you talk like that," cried Mrs. Drury, getting up and coming over to her old man's side, and raising her little bony hand with a half-warning, half-deprecating gesture. "You and I have reason to be thankful, John, that we're still in the land of the living." Think of old Mr. and Mrs. Singleton, who wanted for nothing! She, buried this morning—and she was just my age, John!"

The day after Christmas Mr. Drury put on his rusty top coat, his woollen muffler, and knitted gloves, and left the house without saying a word. Old Jane knew whither he was going, and stood at the low glass door looking after him, until her bright little eyes grew dim with the gathering tears.

When he returned, however, a couple of hours later, she met him with an assumed cagerness of manner, and without the least trace of sorrow in her brave countenance.

"Well, John dear, and what's the result? They would consider you, surely?"

"The result is," said old John, seating himself, and drawing a very long breath, "that you and I shall have to bide our time till the 1st of May. There may be one of the houses free, but nothing can be decided till then."

"Aha! So we have a fair chance, after all," cried the old lady, with a touching attempt at gaiety in her voice.

"Oh, but I'm not for deceiving myself," returned old John, gloomily. "For the fact is, some other party may have just as likely a claim as we have, when the time comes. If I had been Singleton, I'd have built more of them while I was at it. What's the use of three almshouses, I'd like to know?"

"Oh, John, we're sure to get one. Just wait till the 1st of May comes round! Why, man, that's our wedding day, and that's a good omen anyhow on our side. I have a feeling—a presentiment, like, John, that we'll win."

"Ah, you silly little old woman, with your omens and signs!" returned her husband, half pitifully, "it vexes my heart to hear you! Do you know," he continued more vehemently, "do you know these gentlemen I saw this morning recommend us

—you and me, Jane—to go in the meanwhile into the workhouse? We shall have to apply for admittance there on New Year's Day. That's all the luck your bunch of holly brought us "

PART II.

That last day of the year in the little house at the corner of Bridge Street and Bishop's Alley—can words describe it? Silent and sick at heart the husband and wife went about, packing up for their removal from the home of their forty-five wedded years. Forty-five summers ago last May eve old John—then young John Drury—had brought home his girlish, rosy-checked bride from the country, and had made a town dame of her; and had installed her, like a queen, behind the counter of the trim little newly-painted corner shop.

And now at the end of a struggling old year, three of the window shutters are up, and through the space belonging to the fourth streams in just enough of the cold December daylight to show their scanty stock-in-trade tied up in one small bale in the middle of the floor. The Nottingham man has arranged to take it off their hands, and to settle the arrears of the rent with the landlord. Two tiny, separate bundles are being tied up for taking with them—his with him, hers with her. Ay! separately, for in the poorhouse old men and old women, no matter how lovingly they have lived and toiled together, hand in hand—even husband and wife—mayn't live together!

This was the woe that sat in the face of old John and Jane. They dared not look at one another that day; they dared not scan each other's countenances, or both must have broken down.

At last night came on, the last night they were to pass at home! Old John lifted the candle, and, ere he began to ascend the old-fashioned staircase, he turned, and, looking back at his wife, said: "We were always decent people, Jane, and I never heard of a 'Drury' that was a pauper."

"That's the case, John, the Drurys were ever respectable, and always shall be."

"And your folk, too, Jane, held their heads high enough down in the country."

"Why, man, that's neither here nor there," cried old Jane with affected indifference. "It's no shame that we have to go into 'the House."

"Well." said John Drury, slowly measuring his words, "I would rather go into my grave." And then, with a smothered sob, he bent his head and turned away, and mounted up to the little sleeping room above the shop.

Old Jane lingered about downstairs to sweep up the hearth, and make things straight in the tiny kitchen-parlour. It was late when she clambered unstairs to the room above, and she had no light except the broad ray of moonlight streaming in through the dormer window. Her first thought was about old John. She had never been so anxious about him as on this last night they were to be together. His final words had struck a withering awe through her troubled heart. She felt as if a cramp had seized her very vitals. "I won't undress to-night," repeated old Jane. "I will watch by him." Then, drawing her shawl closer round her shoulders, she crept to the side of the bed on which her husband seemed to be asleep. She drew a chair up close, and sat down upon it, folded her arms, then rested her cheek upon her hand, waiting in the attitude of a patient nurse who watches by a sick child's pillow,

Old John felt it all. He knew she was there; but he couldn't speak. At last—at last, he heard her say, "I will look for a passage. Maybe the Lord will show what this is all to come to."

She groped about and brought down a thick old Bible somewhere from a shelf, and first she extracted a whole collection of markers from it, and then she took a fine steel knitting needle, and inserted it right in somewhere about the middle of the volume, instinctively guessing where the Psalms might be, for these were her favourites.

She opened, and, placing the nail of her wrinkled fore-finger on a certain line, tried to make it out at the window by the broad ray of moonlight.

But, alas! either old Jane's eyes were growing dim, or the moonbeam was not strong enough—anyhow, she couldn't see it. Old John peeped round, and watched her try hard, with the book held up above her head, now down, now sideways, now every way. No, it wouldn't do.

Ah! Then old Jane closed the volume; and as she fell on her knees beside his bed, old John heard her repeat softly, to herself, "The Lord's my Shepherd, I shall not want," right through to the last words: "I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever,"

A night's watching usually shows on women less than it does on men; and so it was that Mrs. Drury looked wonderfully composed and tranquil as she came the next morning to prepare her husband's breakfast.

They were to start off immediately afterwards, before any of the neighbours should be about, in order to avoid all leave-takings. Everything was in readiness for their departure, and there remained only this final meal to be partaken of together.

"He shall have a good cup of te for his last," whispered the old lady to herself, "an piece of toast, for the sake of old times"; and with that she placed the stale end of a loaf in the oven—to make it "come again," preparatory to its being sliced and toasted before the fire.

A heavy tread was heard approaching, and old John came down, all white and haggard, and looking ten years older than he really was. For the first time for years and years he hadn't shaved; and now he fussed about the room uneasily searching for his horn-rimmed spectacles. He went in and out, opened the shop door to get a breath of air; then returned; and, flinging himself in his own arm-chair, he buried his face in his hands.

"Don't ask me to eat this morning." he faltered forth, in a half-audible whisper; and at the same time his teeth chattered and his withered frame trembled from head to foot. "There, let me alone. I thought I could have borne it better. But this will pass by-and-bye. Oh Jane, oh Jane, after all these years! No, no, I can't live and do without you."

The poor woman with the breaking heart sprang forward, and laid her head upon the old man's shoulder. "There, there. Don't now! Oh, it isn't right! Oh my own—own John!"

"'A Happy New Year' to you both, Mr. and Mrs. Drury!" roared out a voice in stentorian accents. "Heigh, hallo! What's this? I've wished you 'a happy new year' these three times, and got no answer; and I'm sure I should have gone away again, only I've a letter for you here, a great big one from over the seas, with ninepence to pay on it!" It was the postman who stood in the shop, looking in through the half-open door at John Drury and his wife. He had to repeat the words many times before he could make them comprehend.

"What is he saying about a letter?" inquired old John, looking up as if half-dazed.

"From over the seas!" ejaculated Mrs. Drury, "It wouldn't be—no—it couldn't be. For any sake, Roger, open you, and tell us, for Mr. Drury has mislaid his 'specs' this morning, and I—I'm not quite well."

The postman did as he was bidden, tore open the envelope, glanced down the epistle contained therein, and said, "It's from New South Wales—that's Australia—and signs itself John Drury."

"What! Our little Johnny!" cried old Jane, grasping her husband's arm, whilst her colour came and went. "Our Johnny, our Johnny?" repeated the old man. "Read what he has to say for himself."

Roger, the postman however, had a score of other New-Year missives to deliver that morning; so, mentioning his intention to call again next day for the ninepence, he hastened off, leaving old Mr. and Mrs. Drury in almost as intense a state of agitation as that in which he had found them.

" Dear Father and Mother,

"After so many years of silence, you will wonder to receive a letter from your long-lost son. The fact was that, having left home as I did, against your wishes, I was determined never to appeal to you for assistance, nor indeed to correspond with you at all, until I could be, in some sort, a credit to you. Success does not come at once even out here; but at the end of long waiting and striving, I may say that I have now fairly made my fortune, and may yet atone for some of my youthful follies and insubordination. What now torments me most is the thought of my living out here in ease and plenty, in a brilliant position, and respected by my fellow-settlers, while you, in your declining years, are keeping a little retail store in Bridge Street. It is high time that you two were resting on your oars, and commencing to enjoy some of the ease and luxury of this life.

"I wish you, therefore, to give up the house in Bridge Street, and come right along out here to Sydney. For that purpose I forward you an order to present at my banker's, and I would beg of you to stint yourselves in nothing. Only make ready to start for here by the 1st of May.

"On that day a friend of mine, a Mr. Johnson,

will call for you, and convey you safely to Liverpool, and see you on board *The Kangaroo*, which sails on the third. I shall meet you in Sydney, and bring you out to my place here, which I warrant will surprise you both not a little. Write at once, and let me know that you are coming. The sea voyage is nothing. It will make you both quite young again.

"Your affectionate son,
"John Drury.

"P.S.—When you write, forward me your photographs.—J.D."

"Well, I declare!" cried old John, with the tears standing in his eyes, when his wife had finished reading the letter, "but our Johnny is a thoughtless little lad, to be writing to us only at this time of day. I certainly did not think little Johnny could be alive, let alone well and thriving. He's a wilful boy all the same."

"Boy! laddie! little Johnny!" repeated Jane Drury, ironically. "Why, husband, our Johnny will have come to man's estate ere this, I hope. It's forty-two summers since I first held him in my arms. He's a man now, and a brave one, I'll be bound. I guess I'll go and see him, John. I'm not afraid to start for Sydney. Oh, dear heart, who would have thought it!"

That was a New Year's Day with such wonderful news in the little corner shop in Bridge Street and Bishop's Alley. Certainly no words can properly describe it. Inside half-an-hour old John looked full twenty years younger. The letter was read and re-read a dozen times; and then it was which of the old couple should run out first to communicate its contents to the neighbours.

That evening, Mrs. Cargill, the bonnet-maker, was in, and old Dr. Garlic, the apothecary, and half a score of others, who had had no time the night before for aught but their own concerns.

"He has given us to the 1st of May to get our outfits," cries Mrs. Drury, all excited.

"And I," said old John, "that never saw the sea, to be setting off at my time o' life for Australia."

Of course they didn't think of resuming their business for the sake of four months. The Nottingham man took their whole little stock-in-trade off their hands, as had been arranged, and across the broad, low window Mrs. Drury hung a snow-white muslin curtain, looped up at the sides, and a few geraniums in pots, to invest the place with a domestic air, as the little shop was now converted into a small front parlour. Here they received their guests every day, and talked and planned, and showed their bits of outfit, one by one, as they purchased them for Australia. But the greatest affair of all was the getting of the photographs taken to send with the first letter, for it was about the time that this new mode of taking likenesses first came out; and old John and Jane had never as yet had a photographic album in their hands. They thought it wiser, therefore, not to mention it to the neighbours, lest they might think them "uppish."

What ought they to put on for the operation? That was the question. The new Sydney clothes had not yet arrived from the tailor's and the dressmaker's, so they wore "what they had in the house," and consoled themselves with the reflection, that at any rate, "their Johnny" should see them just as they were ere his letter came. And a few days later, when the neat little black and white proofs were sent home to them in an envelope, the two were highly amused, although they could scarcely recognise their own features. John had his fairly concealed in his big top-coat, horn-rimmed spectacles, and Sunday hat; while Mrs. Drury's was rather the representation of her bonnet and veil than ot herself.

As the weeks slipped by, the whole town gradually became acquainted with the fact that old Mr. and Mrs. Drury, who used to keep the "drapery," had come into a fortune, and were going out to Australia. Some folks said they were quite right to join their son, who had done so well; others sagely shook their heads, and declared it was "the greatest piece of folly for an old couple, come to their years, to dream of emigrating." And some of the very cheerful ones even went so far as to predict that they should never reach the length of Sydney.

The "man from Nottingham" persuaded them to accompany him to his city, in order to purchase their winter wraps. A new cloak Mrs. Drury had just got made, and her husband a long top coat; but "bless my heart," cried the Nottingham man, "it's furs you require, madam, for the long seavoyage, and Mr. Drury must have a plaid." And then he conducted them to a furrier, a friend of his,

who at once wanted Mrs. Drury to purchase a sealskin jacket at fifty guineas, declaring it was the only thing would "turn the salt water." But old John preferred a miniver-lined cloak for his better half; it was nicer looking, he thought, and a good deal cheaper.

When they arrived back home that night, and displayed their purchases to half-a-dozen pairs of curious eyes gathered in after supper-time, Miss Anne Stinter, from the Model School, happened to come in, and at once screamed out, raising her hands in the air, "What! Furs, Mrs. Drury! Furs for Australia! Don't you know that it's a tropical climate you are going to; that you'll be melted with heat; that on Christmas Day the people eat their plum-puddings in muslin frocks under acacia-trees?"

"That can't be true," observed old John, tartly.
"The Nottingham man wouldn't have led us astray
to that extent,"

"Ah, Mr. Drury," cried Mr. Pounce, from the Bank, "Miss Stinter ought to know something about it, and her at the Model School. Take my advice, and keep the furs, now you have invested in them. Only mind you lay in a supply of light summer garments as well. I remember young Scarum, who used to be in our office, wrote home to his brother to send him out a dozen white cotton suits for everyday use."

"I declare, then," chimed in Mrs. Cargill, "I think your Johnny ought to have mentioned exactly all you were to take. 'Twas a little bit thoughtless of him to forget it."

As soon as their visitors' backs were turned, Mr. Drury accosted his wife with: "It seems to me, Jane, that the neighbours are rather free with their remarks."

"Ay," assented she, "about our Johnny, and him such a—such a fine man! Don't you think so, John?"

"I think, Jane, that we'll look well getting melted at Christmas, in a white cotton suit! No, Jane, as the time draws near, I have rather my inward doubts and misgivings about this Australian trip. I have never seen the sea yet; and I must say I have no wish to. Besides, you know, it has all along been a boast of mine, Jane, that I never saw the sea."

"Well, say what you like, John," cried old Jane, smiling, and stamping quickly round the room like

a young creature, as was her wont when in good spirits; "say what you like. You wait here; I'm bound for Sydney!"

The old man laughed outright in spite of himself, and they worried their heads no more about their outfits that night.

* * * * *

May eve had arrived, and old Mr. and Mrs. Drury had everything in readiness for their departure from England. Eight good-sized boxes marked, "Sydney, New South Wales, per steamship Kangaroo," filled up all the available space in what used to be the little shop. Their friends and acquaintances had proposed to give them a farewell supper, but neither of them would agree to such a thing.

"No," said old John; "that would completely upset us, and we intend to attempt no formal leave-takings. When Mr. Johnson comes for us we'll slip quietly away. And once we land in Sydney, we'll write."

That last night which they were to pass on their native soil was a sleepless one for Mr. and Mrs. Drury. I don't believe they even thought of reposing, they were so much excited and preoccupied by the approaching changes and the long voyage.

"Dear, oh! If we are sea-sick the whole way out?" exclaimed old John, for the fortieth time. "I do dread the thought."

"Let us count the luggage again," cried Mrs. Drury, "and examine whether the labels are all right."

And so the night passed, fussing and fidgeting, turning out pockets and turning them in again, looking for horn-rimmed spectacles that "were on," searching for keys that you "had in your hand." Oh, the sickening suspense and weary bustle of the hours that precede a long journey! The most precious moments most helplessly wasted. Mrs. Cargill came in and kindly made them a cup of tea at half-past six in the morning, and this refreshed and calmed them wonderfully.

Then, suddenly, as the three sat together, Mr. and Mrs. Drury on two boxes (he with his hat on and she in her bonnet and cloak, all equipped for Australia), and Mrs. Cargill presiding majestically at the breakfast tray, as though she were the host and they were her visitors, old Jane Drury paused with the cup in her hand and exclaimed: "Eh,

there's *one* thing I had almost forgotten. I must take it with me for the sake of old days, and as a memento. Just wait you here, John, with Mrs. Cargill, and I'll be back again inside half-anhour."

Away she ran, as she was, out to the street, then hastened up Bishop's Alley, past the church, and on to the high road leading towards Singletons'. On the rising ground she relaxed her speed; and then, for the first time, became aware that her husband was following as fast as his legs could carry him. He called her by name, and was fairly out of breath when he overtook her.

"I guessed where you were heading for," he cried. "Women are so foolish with their little tokens and keepsakes. It's a green branch, or flower, or something of that sort you are after. So I thought I had just better come after you to warn you against saying aught about those almshouses to any living creature. "Twould never do to have it gossiped about that we had ever applied there. You know what a disgrace that would be to our Johnny, if it were to come to his ears."

"Eh, now, John, but we ought to be thankful. This is the 1st of May, our wedding-day. And, John dear, we had hoped only to get into one of these wee almshouses; and now——"

"Will you hold your tongue, woman dear, about all that! What if the gardener were to overhear you?"

They turned into the pretty green lane at Singletons', and when they came to the gate-keeper's cottage, they just happened to encounter Abel Burroughs himself, coming out, with a round dish filled with newly-laid eggs.

"Good morning, ma'am." he cried, cheerfully, to old Mrs. Drury: "you're the lady as fancied the bunch of holly berries in winter?"

"Yes; and I have come over this morning to beg a little sprig of that hawthorn," cried Mrs. Drury, pointing to some white blossoms at the summit of an ancient thorn-tree. "My husband and I are leaving the country, and we want only a tiny morsel to take with us."

"Indeed, and you shall have it," returned Abel, kindly. "But, first and foremost, I must run up to the 'house' with these eggs for master's breakfast. His name is Mr. Johnson, this new proprietor, and he has only arrived this morning by the 'express.'"

"That's strange," cried Mrs. Drury. "Johnson' is the name of the Sydney gentleman who is coming to-day to take us."

"If you don't mind a step or two," said Abel, confidently, "I'll show you the 'House.' We've had great to do a-fixing it up. I guess master's not out of his room yet. Anyhow, I'll say you're friends o' mine, if he comes. And, indeed, I'd like you, ma'am, to see the place, as you seem to have an eye for what's tasty—and we have had the work here."

"What lovely borders!" exclaimed old Mrs. Drury. "And what a view, John. And look, look at that nice little summer-house there, at the end of the shady walk."

"There's no place like England!" declared old John, with all the self-opiniativeness of a trueborn son of Albion. "I say it here now, and I'll say it again when I land at Sydney; 'there's no place like England!'" and he struck his cane into the gravel walk, and pressed his thin lips firmly together.

"Come along, and have a look at the inside," called out Abel. "Quick! for I must give cook these eggs to poach for Mr. Johnson's breakfast."

He conducted them through a wide porch, all covered over with raisteria, into a square hall, and thence to a pretty, sunny breakfast-parlour, looking towards the flower-garden. A spotless damask cloth was spread upon the table; and, upon the same had Abel, with real gardener's instinct, placed a bouquet of his finest hot-house productions, cut geraniums, pelargoniums, heliotropes, and calceolarias, and quite a cluster of early roses.

"Eh, John; this couldn't be our Mr. Johnson, of course?" whispered old Mrs. Drury, laying her hand upon her husband's arm. '"And yet it is strange."

"Come, wife dear, let us hasten off," returned old John.

As they spoke, both were gazing on the lovely flowers, and they did not notice that the breakfast-room door was open, and the new proprietor of Singleton Lodge was standing before them.

He was a tall, broad-shouldered man, with a great black beard and a face well-covered with freckles. In his hand he held the photographs of an immense bonnet and veil, and a long top coat, tall hat and spectacles. It was these that caught old Jane Drury's glance at first. She recognised

them at once, and bounded back with a start. Then she raised her eyes from them to the stranger, held her breath for a moment, and rushed forward with a smothered scream, "Our Johnny himself!"

It was, indeed, their Johnny arrived home from Sydney that very morning.

"Ay, father," cried the stranger, "at first, you know, I wanted you both to come out to me, for the people out there to see you, and for you to see the spot where your son has made his fortune. And then I remembered that you had never crossed the sea, and, curious enough, a story afterwards reached my ears about the Singleton Almshouses, which, of course, I didn't believe—not one word of it. The same parties informed me of old Mr. Singleton's death, and of this house being vacant, so I wrote home at once and secured it. And now it's yours, if you prefer to abide in the Old Country. If not, we'll all start off together for Sydney, for of course I am Mr. Johnson."

In old John Drury's eyes there really was no place like England, and in old Jane's, no place like where her boy Johnny was.

How she revelled in that delightful country house, and ran from room to room, admiring and examining everything! She went through every corner of the garden and orchard and the little plantation, with Abel as a guide. The latter brought in a large bunch of white hawthorn blossoms with many awkward compliments, and it adorned the centre of the supper-table the first night. And the house itself underwent a change of name as well as a change of occupants; it was duly registered in the County Directory, and known from that time forward as "Sydney Lodge."

How many times just after the first meeting did old John Drury repeat to his son: "It was right of you, Johnny, to come home and show yourself again in your own native place and to your own townsfolk, and I'm satisfied that you came as you did, by yourself, without any encumbrances in the way of womankind, chick or child. Neighbours would insist on it, you'd be certain to have gone and got married to some foreigner or other out in Australia, some settler's daughter or bushwoman! But I guessed you'd more sense."

Young John said nothing, and the drowsy weeks of June and July went by peacefully—and almost monotonously—in the rambling old country dwelling. Old John and old Jane basked in quiet

comfort in their rustic armchairs in the arbour. Only when August came round, and the evenings began to darken down somewhat earlier, and the lamps would be lighted for supper, it struck old Mr. Drury that there were a great many rooms in the house, more than they really needed. And once, in his wife and son's hearing, he made the remark, "It is well nigh a pity, Johnny, to see so much space going to waste. What would you think, boy, of getting married? You're over forty, I believe, and I had your mother long ere I was that age."

Old Jane smiled a cunning, half-malicious little smile at the corners of her mouth, and her bright little eyes gave what you would know of a twinkle. She nodded to her son.

"Father," cried young John, boldly, and seizing

the man's hand, "I'm off to Plymouth to-morrow morning to await the arrival of the Australasia. You see, I left my wife in Sydney with our one, and I trust to find her on board the Australasia with our two children."

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Christmas time came round once more, and this year mistletoe and holly berries were suspended from the ceiling, and hung over the broad fireside of Sydney Lodge. A happy old couple and a happy young couple rejoiced right heartily in the festive season. Smiles and kind words and loving glances were the best tokens of home blessedness, and, after these, the healthy faces and merry shouts of the two pet rosebuds of the house—the little grandchildren, "Janet" and the "Baby Johnny."



VANQUISHED.

I and Cupid met one day,

He, armed with his bow and arrow;

"Such a tiny toy," sneered I,

"Scarce were fit to wound a sparrow."

So I laid my bosom bare, And the "blind boy" challenged there. Without more ado the rogue,

Bent his bow well-nigh to breaking, Made a target of my heart,

Left it torn in two and aching.

"Which is blinder of us two?"
Love cried, laughing, "I or you?"

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

" & Sush Thee, my Isabie."

(LULLABY.)

Words by SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Music by W. AUGUSTUS BARRATT.







SILENCE THAT IS GOLDEN.

By AGNES GIBERNE,

Author of " Miss Devereux, Spinster," &c.

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"A ND you really are going north to-morrow? Going to spend a whole month in Scotland? How perfectly delicious, you know!" Kitsie's eyes smiled vacantly on the caller, while her thoughts rambled hundreds of miles away. The speaker's real name was Kate, but nobody ever called her so. "I'd give anything in the world to go too; and we were to have been off yesterday, but poor old auntie has had bronchitis, and of course she can't travel, and she would be too awfully dull if my father and I went off without her. It wouldn't do at all. So we are making up our minds to stay at home this October. After all, home is nice enough, and I don't mean to be broken-hearted. Why should one?"

"Ah, you are a genuine philosopher," smiled the caller, a well-dressed little widow, of uncertainly youthful aspect. The fact of widowhood was not apparent in her attire, though some said it resided in a pair of plaintive eyes. "So very wise always to take everything composedly, my dear child."

Kitsie was young enough to dislike being called "a child."

"I wouldn't bother auntie, for anything in the world; and, of course, it has to be. It can't be helped. I wanted to go awfully, and it's a fearful disappointment. I just dote on Scotland. But it would be too idiotic to sit and cry all day. What part of Scotland are you going to?" Kitsie did not pause for an answer. "The Kings have taken a cottage at Braemar for a month, and we meant to go to Braemar, and Beta and I would have done everything together. It would have been perfectly lovely." Kitsie heaved a profound sigh.

"Beta King! I saw her here once. A particular friend of yours, is she not?"

"I should think so! Friends ever since I first went to school. We tumbled straight into love with one another, and we've never since tumbled out again. And never will!" cried enthusiastic Kitsie. "The very nicest, sweetest, dearest girl that ever lived, and the prettiest. We tell each other everything."

"Daughter of ——?" queried Mrs. Rowe, with languid interest.

"Mr. and Mrs. King, of course."

"Well—yes—so one would naturally suppose, my dear child. But who are the Kings?"

"The very greatest friends I have in all the world, outside my father and mother," declared Kitsie.

"She is really very young—very young, indeed!" meditated Mrs. Rowe, lifting a pair of pencilled eyebrows. "And Irish!" which to some extent was true. Kitsie's slim frame enclosed a modicum of Hibernian blood—just enough to give her vehemence of affection, and to make her not always perfectly logical.

"And Mr. King is a-a-"

"The sweetest old man that ever lived! And Mrs. King is another!"

"Another old man?"

"You know what I mean. And Beta is lovely. She has such beautiful big eyes—exactly like a person in a novel. And she holds her head like a queen. And she is as clever! Why, there's nothing on earth Beta can't do. She always came out at the top of every single exam. But if you set me off on Beta, I'll never be able to stop." Mrs. Rowe suppressed a yawn behind her spotless

glove. "I've been talking about her halt the morning already—to my cousin, you know—Captain Bartlet. He's a perfectly delightful man, and Beta is just made for him."

Mrs. Rowe's languid air brightened into prompt attention.

"Ah! ah! now I know you, Kitsie! Now I see what sort of a girl you are! You little naughty match-making puss."

"I'm not! How can you say anything so horrid of me?" cried Kitsie, the quick Irish blood springing to her cheeks. "I'd hate to be a matchmaking woman! But I am perfectly devoted to Beta; and of course she will marry some day; and I don't know one single man who is fit for her, except dear old Dick. And Dick is; and I want him to like Beta. So I just talk about her to him. Nobody could call that match-making!"

The widow's white teeth gleamed anew. "But they have not met yet, so the thing sounds rather vague."

"But they have," exclaimed incautious Kitsie.

"Of course they have met. They were both here last Easter for a whole fortnight, and once before, a year ago, for three weeks. And he likes her, I know,—he couldn't help liking her,—only one doesn't feel sure how much."

"Of course she likes him?"

Kitsie was dimly conscious of being led somewhere, and made an effort to be discreet. "Everybody likes Dick." she replied.

"Including your friend Beta!"

Mrs. Rowe arose smilingly, to say good-

"Well, my dear child, I heartily wish that your dream may come true. It's so charming to see people marry, when one knows them to have been exactly made for one another. But man is a rather perverse being; and if I were you I would not discuss Beta's charms too perpetually. It might have a reverse effect, and turn him against her. Pity if he grew tired of her name,—a pretty name, too!"

Kitsie relieved her feelings by a vehement rush up the oaken staircase. "I can't bear that woman!" she burst out in soliloquy. "She's perfectly unbearable! And what did make me speak to her about Dick and Beta? Such a stupid thing to do! Auntie always says I talk too much; and I am sure it is true."

H.

"Hallo, Kitsie! what now? Whither are you whizzing, rocket-fashion?" Captain Bartlet mischievously planted himself with his back to the closed door of the morning room, keeping Kitsie prisoner. He looked upon her as very much of a child still, despite her twenty summers, and he enjoyed teasing her almost as much as she usually enjoyed being teased. They were on pleasant brother-and-sister terms.

Ten days had passed since the widow's call, and Captain Bartlet was remaining on, as he often did, rather indefinitely.

"O Dick! let me pass! The postman has come."

"Let him! Postmen usually do come at stated times. I wish they didn't, for my part. Letters are good to receive, but bad to answer."

"Oh do be good, and let me go. I know there will be a letter from Beta."

"Have you an inner consciousness of its arrival? Don't be in a hurry. Haste is always undignified; and I have a piece of news to impart."

Kitsie looked at him despairingly.

"You don't want to hear my news,—eh? What, no curiosity? Is it possible that a woman exists without curiosity in her composition?"

"Dick, I want to hear, of course,—only if I might just run out first."

"One moment. Letters are improved by keeping. I'm going away, Kitsie. Perhaps on Friday. And—I am going to Braemar."

"Dick!" Kitsie's eyes widened, and her face flushed.

"You're not sorry to say good-bye-not an atom."

"Oh, but I am. Only-you will see Beta!"

"Not I. Why should I? Unless we chance to meet by accident on the top of Lochnagar."

"Dick, do be good. Do please be sensible." Kitsie's little fingers found their way to his coatsleeve, with a beseeching touch. "You will call and see her, won't you? I should like you to know her father and mother—and Beta is so nice. And you can take her my love."

"You never, by any chance, send her your love through the post-office?"

Kitsie's face flashed a response. "Not nearly so much as I want. They won't take more than a certain weight." Dick laughed heartily. "Well done, Kitsie. But mind, if I am charged for over-weight of luggage, I shall send a bill to you for the amount. All right. I'll convey an impalpable packet of love, and I'll pay a morning call—just to inspect the old people, and to leave a polite card. You can't expect more than that from a man thirsting for Nature's beauties. Have I tried your patience long enough? Off with you, and see if a letter is really there from the beloved and adorable Beta."

Kitsie ran out, feeling slightly flat. If he had really cared for Beta, could he have spoken of her so jestingly? Kitsie was quite sure that she, in Dick's place, would not have been able. But then—she was not Dick, and Dick was not Kitsie.

On the hall-slab were several letters arranged in a row, addressed to different members of the household; and amongst them was one in Beta's handwriting, upon which she instantly pounced.

Nobody was at hand, and Kitsie retired into the deep hall-window to enjoy her treat.

The opening words of the letter made her eyes widen in amazement:—"Dear Kitsie"—it was never by any chance less than "Dearest" or "Darling" or "Sweetest!" Kitsie was one of those little affectionate clinging creatures, who are petted by everybody; and she expected the petting as a matter of course. Beta, though also affectionate, was not given to the use of such bucket-loads of effusive adjectives as Kitsie would pile on the heads of those she loved; but that she should term Kitsie nothing more than "dear" was unheard of. What less could she have said to the barest acquaintance?

Kitsie read on, and her cheeks became crimson, while her little foot unconsciously stamped the oak floor. What could Beta mean? What was it all about? Beta—the calm and queenly Beta—to write after such a mode as this? Kitsie could hardly credit the evidence of her own eyes. Her heart beat fast, and a lump came into her throat.

Somebody had been calling—Beta did not say who—and had been telling her of something that Kitsie had said about herself—Beta. Yes, that was the foundation of the mischief. No recollection of Mrs. Rowe came up at the moment; indeed, Kitsie was far too much excited for calm recollection. She did not even pause to conjecture who the "somebody" might be. All her mental energies were absorbed with the accusation itself. Some-

body, no matter who, had reported Kitsie as having joked carelessly about Dick and Beta, as having suggested the idea of a possible engagement, as having expressed a wish that Dick would care for Beta, and as having intimated, not only that Beta did care for Dick, but that it would be no fault of Beta's if the said engagement failed to come off.

"I would not have thought it of you, Kitsie," wrote Beta, under evident pressure of annoyance and humiliation. "I did think you loved me; and this shows how mistaken I have been. To say such unkind things of me behind my back, to people who don't know me, and so cannot judge for themselves—it is really too bad. I do not think I am harsh-judging, but this is what one cannot possibly pass over. If anybody else had said such a thing, I would not care—I would hold up my head, and brave it. But that you should do it—you, of all people, after all these years of being my friend, to speak of me in such a way—is more than I can stand. It shows how little our friendship is really worth.

"I dare say you will say you did not mean any harm, and will tell me you are wrong,—and of course I will forgive, if you ask me. But there are some things that one cannot forget, and this is one of them.

"Of course it will not really harm me. It is so utterly untrue → I mean, so untrue to imply that I ever could or would let myself care for a man more than he cared for me-so as to let myself down in any way, I mean. How you could dream it of me I cannot imagine. I do feel very very much hurt and grieved about the whole matter. It almost seems as if the Kitsie I have loved is no longer in existence, as if our friendship were all a delusion. And though this sort of unkind gossip cannot realiy do one harm, still people will talk, and will say unkind things; and it is you who have put it into their power to do so. I always have known that you were impulsive, and inclined to talk too fast; but I never never would have suspected that you could behave in such a way to me.

"But I do not see the use of writing any more. It is done, and it cannot be undone; and I have to bear it, as well as to bear the pain of knowing that you are not what I have always believed you to be."

Kitsie's feelings, as she read and re-read this

effusion, may be imagined. She was by nature peppery, and all the indignation of which she was capable rose in billows, swamping milder thoughts. Even on a second perusal of the letter, no recollection of the widow's call came to mind; and, perhaps, it is not surprising. Kitsie did not know that Mrs. Rowe had intended to go to Braemar. Moreover, ten days had intervened; and Kitsie had many callers, with whom she was wont to converse at a rattling pace. One rattle more or less made small impression on her mind; and in the engrossing interest of Dick's visit she had never bestowed another thought upon Mrs. Rowe.

Even if she had remembered, it would have made little difference in this first excitement. Kitsie felt herself to be very hardly treated. She was far too wrathful for quiet weighing of the affair; and nothing was more distant from her mind than any thought of delay in action. With flaming cheeks she rushed to her own dainty boudoir, and plumped down before the davenport. Anything more unkind, more unjust, more cruelly untrue, than Beta's accusation seemed to her impossible; and all she craved was an outlet for her explosiveness. Shaking with inward turmoil, she seized pen and paper, and scrawled a stormy reply, scattering inky splashes around with sublime indifference.

"I think it is quite too horridly unkind of you to believe such a thing of me, Beta! I wouldn't have thought you knew me so little. It just shows how little you have ever really cared. I never said a single word of the kind of course, I didn't and you ought to know that I didn't. How could I tell anybody that you were in love with Dick, when I don't know that you are?" At this moment a vague recollection of Mrs. Rowe flashed up. "I did say to one horrid gossiping woman, who was pumping me, that I wished Dick to fall in love with you; but I couldn't have said you were in love with him. I could only have said that you liked him very well; and I wouldn't even say that. I only said everybody liked him. But I don't want him to care about you now-not in the very least, If you can believe such things of me, the less we see of one another the better. I don't want you for a friend any more, and I'll never write to you again. So that is all at an end." Kitsie gave an odd gulp, like a half sob; but she scratched on

inexorably:—"And you needn't talk all that rot about forgiving, because there is nothing to forgive, and I'll never, never, never say I'm sorry for what I didn't do, and I'll never promise to keep from doing it again. So there!—now you understand, and we both understand, and it's all at an end. And this is the very last letter I mean ever to write; so there's no need for you to answer it.

"Yours,
"KATE BARTLET."

A tap at the door coincided with this crushing conclusion. "Any letters for the post, Miss? John is just starting."

"Yes. Wait a moment." Kitsie scrawled an address with all conceivable despatch, closed the envelope, stuck on a stamp much awry, and tossed her production to the man. Then she stood at the window, still heaving all over with passion, till she saw John striding away down a line at some distance.

Gone—past recall! Nothing now could check the flight of that fell missive to Braemar. Unless, indeed, she instantly sent a messenger flying after John, to capture and bring the letter back. This might be done—but only if she acted at once. In five minutes John would reach the post-office, and two minutes later the mail-cart would be off.

Kitsie did not act at once. She made no effort. A gnawing whisper suggested itself, "Hadn't I better have waited? Is it worth while to have said so much?" But the whisper was stamped down. Kitsie still felt herself direfully aggrieved.

To escape from her own thoughts she stepped defiantly downstairs, and encountered Dick. He gazed with astonished eyes.

"Hallo, Kitsie! You look as if you had been taking lessons on demeanour from a turkey-cock in a rage! What's up? Letter not come?"

"Ves

"Miss King has not tumbled over the Lochnagar corrie?"

" No."

"What is it then?"

Kitsie turned her scarlet little countenance upon him. "Beta has treated me shamefully, and I don't mean ever to have anything more to do with her."

Dick faintly whistled.

"She has behaved abominably. I shall never write to her again."

"Really! how distracting!" Dick's eyes showed amusement, mingled with concern.

"You may laugh, but it is true. You needn't speak her name to me again. I have done with Beta. And you needn't ask questions, because I don't mean to tell you anything. Only. Beta isn't my friend any longer." Kitsie reared up her head like a young giraffe, then suddenly drooped it, and burst into a passion of tears.

"I expected as much," murmured Dick. He patted her on the shoulder, as one might pat a naughty child, "Come, come!—don't be in a hurry. Sleep it over, and you'll see things differently to-morrow morning."

But Kitsie rushed away, and he heard her sobbing all down the passage. An inscrutable smile took possession of Dick's face.

III.

Beta was already repenting her own impetuous letter.

Ordinarily she was not impetuous; far from it. She was a gracious maiden, of rather stately bearing, not given to acting upon impulse. But being after a gentle fashion both reticent and proud, Mrs. Rowe's utterances, as detailed to her by a mutual acquaintance, had pierced her armour in its most vulnerable spot. Perhaps she could have borne almost any accusation better than this particular one. To make matters worse, she knew that Captain Bartlet was then staying at Kitsie's home; and in her heart she knew that she did like him extremely-much more than she liked folks in general. This rendered it the more unbearable that Kitsie of all people should have said such words about her. Even to suggest to a gossiping caller, as the barest possibility, that Beta ever could or ever would show herself more ready to marry any man living than that man should show himself to marry her-the very idea was too odiously impossible to be endured!

If only she had really not cared; if only she could have honestly declared that she detested Dick Bartlet—but there lay the sting.

As days slipped by, however, and no answer arrived from Kitsie, Beta's wrath cooled fast. She was of a sunny loving temperament, and her calm sense gradually re-asserted itself. After all, had she not acted too hastily? Had she not too quickly accepted as truth what might be a mere exaggerated version of some harmless remark? It was not like Kitsie to speak so of one whom she loved. Kitsie might be impulsive and somewhat unguarded, but unkind and untrue she was not. Through all the years of their girlish friendship, Kitsie had been as true to Beta as Beta to Kitsie. Never had she been known to make assertions about Beta which, travelling round to their object, might cause pain. It was surely unfair to doubt her now. She might have let slip some silly remark, some careless joke, capable of exaggeration at the hands of a third person; but more than this seemed hardly possible.

"And my letter was so sharp, so severe," thought Beta in self-reproach. "I should have expected Kitsie to flare up, and write back in a rage; and she has not done so. I do think it is very kind and sweet of her to be so forbearing. Poor little darling! my letter must have worried her awfullyand she is just waiting patiently now, to give me time to recover myself. I shall have one of her loving little notes soon, saying how sorry she is, and what an absurd girl I have been to believe a mere report so easily. I do believe Mrs. Rowe must have invented nine-tenths of what she said to Mrs. Grey, and very likely Mrs. Grey added the other tenth. How I do hate gossip! But I'll never listen to it again. Kitsie is a dear to take my letter so sweetly. Not one single angry word in answer. It is awfully good of her. Really, what mother says is true-one ought always to wait twenty-four hours before sending off a doubtful letter. And now I'll write again, to tell Kitsie how sorry I am to have said such things to her."

Many days had gone by, but somehow Kitsie's letter had never reached Braemar.

Kitsie meanwhile had not at all recovered her usual serenity. One hour she would be vexed and moody, another hour depressed and tearful. Dick still remained in the house. He wanted very much to go to Braemar; but he wanted first to find out the right and wrong of this mysterious quarrel. No information was to be obtained from Kitsie. In all her anger she was still too loyal to give Dick the faintest inkling of what Beta believed she had said

One afternoon Kitsie sat gloomily in the hall

window, swinging her hat and biting her lip, occupied in profound meditation upon the general blackness of human nature and the evanescence of human friendships. The postman arrived; and Kitsie did not rush to meet him. She remained a fixture; and when a couple of letters were handed to her, she would not even look at them till the man-servant was gone.

Beta's handwriting. Kitsie saw that, and saw nothing else. A wave of the old warm girlish love rolled up; and then her eyes grew dim, for she knew this could be only another outpouring of reproach and recrimination. She tore it open, notwithstanding, and glowed all over at the opening utterance of "My darling Kitsie." The next moment she was half-laughing, half-sobbing, in a maze of perplexity. "But what does it mean? What can she mean? I did write, you dearie, and I wish I hadn't—such a horrid letter as it was."

Kitsie read the little note, and pressed it vehemently to her lips, quite unaware that Dick's laughing eyes were not many yards distant. As yet he said not a word, and Kitsie mechanically glanced at her second letter, to perceive a much disfigured envelope, with "Try here," and "Try there," scrawled across it, and with a final announcement in red ink that it was returned to its perpetrator by Post Office authority.

A look of bewilderment crossed Kitsie's face, followed by a gleam of intelligence, and then came a burst of laughter. Kitsie shook with merriment, and peal after peal rang through the hall, so infectious in kind that Dick shouted with her, not knowing why.

"Oh dear! oh dear! what a goose I was! and how glad I am," gasped Kitsie.

"Glad to have been a goose?"

"Oh, very very glad!" Kitsie tore open the envelope, and pulled out her own scrawled and blotted epistle. Dick took it out of her hands, and glanced over the last page.

"Eh! what's this? Has she sent it back to you? Kitsie!—you could write so to her."

"No, no, no! She hasn't had it. It never reached her. Oh, I'm so glad! What an ass I was, not to hold my tongue."

"Your pen, you mean. Yes, I agree with you; you were."

"Dick, give it to me. Don't read any more. It's a dreadful letter, and I have been miserable ever since it went off. She has written me the sweetest answer—no, not answer, because she never got mine—every inch as if she had been all in the wrong, and as if I were an angel! And it's she that is the angel; not I. Dick, you may read her letter—not the other. Oh, don't! I'm so ashamed and so glad! To think—if it had reached her.

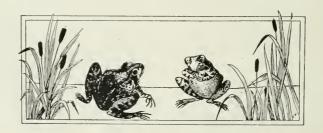
Dick looked stern. "I don't understand why it did not."

"Why, I put a wrong address. Instead of the name of their cottage—What is the name? I never can remember it quickly—and 'Braemar, Aberdeenshire,' I wrote the name of the Kings' own house, near Weston. I wrote—'Brentford, Aberdeenshire.' I must have been perfectly crazy."

"Lucky sort of craze for once. Kitsie, --mind you never tell her what you wrote. I promise I never will."

Dick tore the letter into minute fragments, deposited them in the fireplace, and made a little bonfire. When no gleam of white paper remained, he stood up, and casually remarked—

"By-the-by, I'm off to Braemar to-morrow."



Egeria's Daughter.

WOE is me, Egeria's daughter!
A sentient shadow, half divine,
The sinless Powers of Air and Water
Fused in me their essence fine;
The tide of my heart is red and royal;
On human brows the crown is set
Of ancient lineage, pure, law-loyal;
So am I dowered, and yet, and yet—
Woe is me when the shadows fall,
And the sad moon reigneth over all!

I have met, uncheeked, by the forest fountain, The grave sweet eyes of my mother's race; Far at the core of the ancient mountain The lore of eld I learned to trace.

The soft cold hand of an Oread maiden Led me aloft when the stars are small; I saw the blind world over-laden, And wist of the cause and end of all: But woe is me when the red moon dies, A morning ghost in the nether skies!

O cold and clear, O calm and holy!
The stars are even as you, I ween.
I peaked and pined in your ether slowly;
For the bar of clay ran red between.
Sweet eyes, abyss of earth and water
Unveiled before you as a scroll,
But ye could not fathom in Numa's daughter
The blind babe-groping of her soul.
Woe is me when the sun is high,
And the lifting dew is gone and dry!

"The gleam of the hearth is warmer, sweeter, Than Aldeboran in all his pride; The span-long life of a woman completer Than elves' unaging dower," I cried. By crystal grot I did not linger, But sped to the haunts of Latin maids; Twined the wool on a supple finger The live-long day till even shades. But woe is me, O woe of all! The apples of Pleasure are dust and gall!

The bells of life rang wild and gladly, Rang and clanged in the pulse's beat; My heart leaped up and followed it madly—The dear dim maze of the dancing feet.

I drank the delirium-cup of willing—The Light of the Eyes, and Love, and Power; The pink Hours slept on my breast beguiling Their father Time in my Latin bower. But woe is me in the arid noon, When the lily is laid in her dying swoon!

Long, long since the dreams had waking;
The bloom died off a fruitless tree;
Long, long since the bubble was breaking,
Froth and air on a summer sca,
Daughters of men, in the vanished playtime
Ye fell from me, and I from you,
When the close grey mist in the noon of day-time
Made wan my face in mortal view—
When the mist of the veil-less ages' lore
Lapped me cold for evermore!

Love passed like a phantom of the dawning:
My set lips never bade him stay,
For the gulf that leaped before me yawning—
The vision of spirit mismatched with clay—
Gold for brass; the white Truth meeting
A finite faith, a finite heart!
The mortal throbs down-dropped their beating,
Faint as a spirit about to part;
And from that hour I walk alone,
And earth and sky have heard my moan!

Mother of mine, whose love declining
Showered a mortal life with gold,
Happy were you, his life-star shining,
Royally giving your gifts untold.
By cords of flesh my hands were holden
From power, and the Elfin might serene
Barred the woman's door of golden:
Too low to lead, too high to lean,
I walk alone till the stars shall fade,
And their place be black in the heavens' shade!

JESSIE MACKAY



"WOE IS ME, EGERIA'S DAUGHTER!"



CHAPTER IX. RAYMOND DUNBAR.

THE bells of Edinburgh chimed out on the evening air. It was eight o'clock, and the streets were thronged with people hurrying on various errands. Coach after coach rattled along, allowing but a passing glimpse of their fair occupants; while here and there might have been observed a sedan chair moving onwards at a more sober pace, and preceded by linkboys with flaming torches. At the corners of the streets groups of citizens stood, idly watching the passers-by, or conversing on the current topics of the day. Occasionally the clear, musical voices of the fishwives were heard calling "Caller herrin'!" as they strode along with their creels strapped on their shoulders, or perched on their heads, inviting purchases of their "bonnie fish and halesome farin', just new drawn frae the Forth."

Wending his way through the narrow streets with which Old Edinburgh still abounds, a young man might have been seen, whose speed betokened business rather than pleasure. The books under his arm were hardly needed to tell you that he was a student: severe intellectual labour had left its impress on the delicate features, whose refinement was but an index of the mind within. Deep lines were engraven on the white, open brow, and the dark eyes beneath had in them that far-off look indicating a spirit absorbed in thoughts with which the outer world has nothing to do. The tall, spare form, too, bore traces of having been unequal to cope with the demands of the eager mind. The limbs had lost their roundness and fulness; the hands were painfully thin and white. The moonlight heightened the pallor of a face whereon was written a tale of earnest purposes and noble deeds.

On he sped, looking not to left or right, until he gained a region of the town where better and larger houses marked the abode of its wealthy citizens. To one of the handsomest of these mansions he now directed his steps, and, ascending a broad flight of steps, knocked for admission.

A footman in livery opened the door, and led him through a richly adorned hall to a door at the further end, at which he tapped lightly. A clear voice called "Come in," and the young man entered a luxurious studio, replete with works of art, including statues, busts, pictures, and antique relics of priceless value, while long rows of books lined the walls. The ruddy firelight cast a warm glow on the carpet, and also showed a diminutive figure that lay coiled up in an easy-chair before the blaze.

As the visitor advanced, an eager face, sharpened with pain, was turned towards him; but the moment the large, piercing eyes beheld him, a smile radiantly happy broke over it, and a shrunken hand was extended in greeting.

"You will excuse my not rising, Mr. Dunbar," said the boy, clasping his tutor's hand affectionately. "This has been one of my black days, and my back aches dreadfully still. I don't know how I managed to get up at all this afternoon; but, somehow, when you are coming, the pain never feels so bad. Take a seat here beside me. You see I have brought the desk near to my chair, so that I can read more easily, and you will be about to look on with me."

A look of tender sympathy replaced the tutor's

smile of greeting, and he retained the delicate hand extended to him within his own (hardly less delicate) as he kindly said: "My poor boy! I am sorry for that. You should not have left your room. I don't think you are able to read to-night. Let us postpone our work until you are stronger. You know I cannot allow you to sacrifice your health on my account."

A radiant smile illuminated the boy's thin, pinched features as he replied: "Is it a sacrifice to do what we delight in doing? Are you not my very best friend, Mr. Dunbar? And is it not the joy of my life to show my love for you in the only way within my power? If I had been brave and handsome, like you. I could have proved my love in many other ways; but, you see, I'm only a poor cripple."

The sad, despairing tones in which these last words were uttered went straight to the heart of Raymond Dunbar, for they conveyed a whole world of meaning; they told of a young heart's ardent hopes ruthlessly blighted by the fell hand of disease. All that wealth could do in procuring the highest medical skill had been done; and yet the boy remained as he was.

He was an only child, and the hopes of the fond parents had all centred in him. Keen, therefore, was their disappointment when it became apparent that, as far as human probability went, he must be to the end of his days hopelessly infirm. But who shall describe the anguish of the boy himself when the bitter truth slowly dawned upon him? when he saw himself for ever excluded from the joy of youth, and the grand pursuits of riper years? when he saw that henceforth he must remain a burden to himself, and a living disappointment to his parents?

And yet the mind that dwelt in that poor, fragile tenement was strong and active, sometimes even threatening to destroy the body with which it was so ill-mated. In the breast of Bertram Norton burned the soul of a hero: the passionate longing to do and dare never swelled higher in human breast than in his; yet upon all those high aspirations a check had been imposed, and what the spirit willed the flesh refused to perform. And so the struggle went on, even although the hopes which for a time had buoyed him up were gone. For with the knowledge of his irremediable misfortune there came a spirit of rebellion so fierce as sometimes to endanger the frail life itself.

In course of time, though no sigh of resignation escaped the quivering lips, the sharpness of his trial was partly assuaged by the circumstance of his developing an excessive love for books. Shut out from active participation in the pursuits of life, he turned to the only sources from which he could derive a knowledge of that world he was never destined to enter. The avidity he displayed in acquiring knowledge increased as he advanced in years, until, at his own request, his father had made application for a tutor. Hearing of Raymond Dunbar through a fellow-student, he had engaged his services, with the happiest results to his son, whose progress became rapid from that hour, while his spirits seemed to rise as they had never yet done. The cause of both of these results soon became apparent in the attachment between pupil and tutor-an attachment which seemed fraught with hopefulness to Bertram.

Endowed with that keen discernment which is ever the source of genuine sympathy, Raymond Dunbar soon found the key to his pupil's seemingly strange behaviour at times, and followed up the discovery by winning Bertram's confidence. The boy saw that he was understood, and so freely poured out the tale of his sorrows in Raymond's ear. Not only his sorrows; even his passionate outbursts against what he called his "dark doom" found free expression in his tutor's presence. But Raymond could calm these storms of wild rebellion as neither father nor mother had ever succeeded in doing; not by attempting to deceive the boy as to the extent of his misfortune, but by showing him how it could best be borne.

Just now, as he listened to these sad words, he placed his hand kindly on the small head, and in gentle tones replied: "Even if you were a strong man, Bertram, you could not show your regard for me in any way more to my satisfaction than by being brave and true; and you are both as it is. True bravery, as it seems to me, is far more a thing of the mind than of the body; and it requires greater strength and courage to conquer one's self than a host of enemies. Don't you remember words I quoted to you once before from an older book than Homer? 'Greater is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.' You may be a hero, Bertram, in a far higher sense than Achilles, or Hector, or Ajax, for the prowess of these heroes lay almost exclusively in mere physical strength;

whereas real heroism consists in noble, high-souled deeds—deeds of self-denial for the good of others. I hope, nay I am sure, I shall one day see you a hero of this sort, a man whom men will honour and love for being a blessing and an ornament to humanity. Now, shall we begin?"

He pointed to the book lying open on the desk, and his willing pupil took it up, and began in clear, musical accents to read the grand, majestic lines of Homer.

The portion he read described the announcement to Achilles of the death of his chosen friend and comrade, Patroclus. In deep, thrilling tones that answered to the spirit of the poetry like harpstrings to the master-touch, the boy recited those touching, passionate verses, that quiver yet with the sob of a stricken heart, until, as he came to the lament of the slave-girl Brisëis over the dead body of him who had been her sole protector in an hour of peril and despair, his lips trembled, and a tear fell upon the page.

The tutor smiled, but it was a kind, sympathetic smile, and his pupil, chancing to look up, returned it shyly. Presently his face grew thoughtful again as he said: "Achilles loved Patroclus; but Patroclus was brave and beautiful and noble: he could put on Achilles' armour, and lead on his men to victory, when Achilles refused to fight; and though he fell at last, he fell doing a glorious deed. No wonder Achilles mourned for him. But had he been weak and helpless like me, do you think Achilles would have said of him that he loved him 'even as his own life'? No; he would have despised him, as all weak things are despised—as I am."

The boy's voice had in it a bitterness, and his face a look of pain, that smote Raymond Dunbar's heart; for he knew well how much truth lay in what his pupil had said; that the ruthless, selfish world would have little to bestow on the cripple but neglect or aversion; and that compassion rather than love would be felt for him by all save the few who knew him intimately. He could not blind himself to the fact that, in the main, Bertram Norton's life would be one of suffering. Only one remedy could mitigate that suffering, viz., resignation born of immortal hope; and toward this it had ever been his aim to direct the poor boy's mind from the beginning of their intimacy.

"I believe your supposition is correct, Bertram,"

he said in answer to the last passionate outburst: "if Patroclus had not been beautiful, and brave in battle, I don't think Achilles would have loved him at all; for the Greeks, up to the latest stage of their national greatness, despised what was weak or unlovely. Even Plato, their greatest philosopher, encouraged this feeling. They seemed to know nothing of that noblest of all love which springs from the love of what is pure and elevating in the soul. They never dreamed of that grand ideal which Christ by His life and teaching revealed to the world, inculcating pity for the weak, compassion for the destitute, and love even for enemies. So unavailing was all their philosophy to lift them to a higher level. And it is humiliating to think that the majority of mankind, even at this day, have no higher conceptions of life and its duties than those unenlightened heathen of two thousand years ago. But, believe me, Bertram, to return to what we were speaking about, those who can despise any human being because of some physical defect are worthy only of contempt, and prove themselves to be morally depraved."

He paused in expectation of some response: but his pupil had drawn closer to his side, and the small round head with its silky brown hair lay still and quiet on his arm.

In a more serious tone he resumed: "You know, Bertram, when God sees fit to lay a burden on us, we must still believe, even though we cannot see the reason, that He has done so in love. If——"

The slight frame was quivering now with emotion, and, starting from his reclining position, the boy burst into a passionate protest for which the tutor was hardly prepared.

"Don't tell me that," he cried; "don't tell me that a God of love laid this cruel burden on me, shut me out from all the brightness and the happiness that every boy but me enjoys, gave me this crippled body that makes life a curse. How could I love Him, if I believed He had done it, when I see the boys and girls bounding past my window, all laughing and merry, while I am a captive here? How could I help hating Him, when they taunt me with 'There goes the cripple'? No. I will never believe it. It was sin, not God, that brought this curse on me. I only wish I could die, and get rid of my fetters for ever!"

He stopped exhausted, and almost unconsciously

let his head droop upon the arm that had come to be a place of refuge and rest for him.

Raymond forbore to speak, for he knew how vain were words addressed to one in such a mood. Several times before he had seen indications of the chafed spirit writhing in the boy's breast under his affliction; and he knew that, if left alone, the agitation would subside. So he remained silent for some time, until he felt a tear drop upon his hand. Bending close over the half-concealed face, he saw that it was wet.

"Bertram, my poor boy, what ails you?" he asked. "Are you in pain?"

"No, no," he moaned, "it's not that; but oh, to think I can never be what I wanted so much to be! never go out to fight in the battle of life, and win the love of those I love! Oh, Mr. Dunbar, you can never know how bitter it is!"

Raymond wound his arm about the trembling figure, and, passing his hand caressingly over the head that nestled on his other arm, said,—

"Do not your father and mother love you, Bertram?"

"Yes; but they can never be proud of me," was the answer, uttered in broken syllables; "I am only a disappointment to them."

"You are far dearer to them than you have any idea of," rejoined Raymond; "and their disappointment is only on your account. And, Bertram, perhaps you have never thought that this trial weighs heavier on them than on yon, for they know that all their love cannot remove it from you. And when they see how you rebel against it, their sorrow is increased tenfold. Dear Bertram, will you not try to make them happier by being more cheerful and patient yourself? If you wish to be brave and noble, and win their admiration, this is the way to do it. There is no heroism like bearing misfortune calmly. Won't you try, Bertram?"

There was no response save by a close pressure of the hand.

Raymond continued: "I have become very much attached to you, Bertram; do you know what would increase that attachment?"

Bertram was silent, and Raymond proceeded to answer the query himself.

"Your conquering yourself," he said; "'the mind is the measure of the man.' Prove that, Bertram, by your actions, and every noble-minded man will honour you as a hero as well as myself."

The drooping head was raised now, revealing a face radiant with a smile of vivid delight at these welcome words.

"And is it something more than pity that makes you so kind to me?" asked the boy, fixing his eager eyes on the face bent lovingly toward him.

"Yes; a much stronger feeling than that," was the answer, spoken in earnest, convincing tones.

"And will you let me be your friend all through life, till I die?" cried the grateful Bertram.

"I claim you as my friend," returned the tutor, a beautiful smile lighting np his features, "and shall continue to do so always. Only, remember, my admiration is to be won in the way I referred to."

"Then I will win it," exclaimed Bertram impetnously; "you will find me a different person from this hour. For your sake, I will try more than ever to conquer my cross temper, and when the evil spirit returns, a kind smile from you will charm it away."

"Thank you, Bertram; I am as proud of you now as though you were buckling on your armour and going ont to fight for me. It is a compact which we will regard as sealed. And now, what of our work?" asked Raymond, pointing to the unopened exercise book and the neglected "Iliad." "I fear we must postpone it until to-morrow. You see I have been teaching you more important lessons to-night; and if you learn them well, I shall be better satisfied than if you knew Greek as well as Homer himself. But I must bid you adieu, I think, as it is getting late, and I have yet some work to do."

"Oh, I was forgetting," exclaimed Bertram, raising himself, as his tutor prepared to take his departure; "your kindness makes me selfish. When do you compete again at the university?"

"Next week, Bertram; and how I shall accomplish all the work that must be done before the twenty-seventh I hardly know. However, as I succeeded last time, I hope I shall again."

"Should you not discontinue my lessons at once?" suggested Bertram, stifling the selfish wish to keep his beloved tutor still with him.

"No, no; I shall not be obliged to desert you, Bertram," was the kind answer. "And, now that we have made this compact, I expect that we shall progress faster than ever. Now I must go."

Bertram detained his hand, and, with a look of intense affection, said, slowly and earnestly:—

"If my life ever produces anything good or noble, I will owe it to you, Mr. Dunbar. It was you who first taught me to look beyond self to better things; and if I ever reach Heaven, I will bless you for having first shown me the way."

So touching was this token of affection that Raymond Dunbar could return no answer. Hastily pressing the thin, small hand, he hastened from the room.

The fire was burning faintly when he entered his small apartment, but its light was sufficient to reveal an object lying on the table, the sight of which caused his eye to brighten. It was a letter, and he eagerly held it to the light to scan the address, written in a hand he instantly recognised. Then he lighted a lamp, and read the following:—

"MY DEAR SON,-Do you think your old father very exacting if he asks you to come home without delay? The truth is, Ray, I am growing old, I feel it, and need you more than ever. The house seems desolate without you, even the garden caunot entertain me as once it could. I am lonely, and my duties seem to grow strangely heavy without your assistance. I have been thinking much of you, of late; and something I heard from Mr. Kenneth Errol to-night has made me all the more anxious to have you with me. Mr. Harry Douglas, who saw you lately, brought home the report that you were looking ill. Now, if this be the case, I need hardly ask the reason: you have been overworking yourself. My dear boy, you must not do that; all the honours of the university will not compensate for the loss of your health. And there is no need to burden yourself with additional private work. I know you undertook the tutorship at the Nortons simply because you were averse to draw upon my means; but, indeed, that scruple is most unreasonable, for what is any small inconvenience entailed by a little extra expenditure on yourself compared with the privation I suffer from your absence? Give up the Nortons at once; eripe te morae, as Horace would tell you, and come home to your friends at Glenathole. The fresh sea breezes will blow away the cobwebs that must have gathered during those months of uninterrupted study. You may well be content with the laurels already won; do not be too ambitious for more.

"I have another argument for urging your re-

turn, which, I daresay, will weigh even more with you than the last. There is one person here besides myself, who, I think, finds Glenathole less interesting since you left it. You can guess whom refer to. Forgive me if I presume; but we have no secrets from each other, and, after all, your regard for Mary Errol is not a secret.

"Come home, then, for either or both of these reasons, and cheer up the heart of your old father, whose greatest earthly blessing you are.

"May God guide you and keep you from all ill. To His love I commend you.—Your affectionate ather.

"JOHN DUNBAR."

"My dear old father!" thought Raymond, as he placed the letter in his bosom, "how little he knows what a shield his prayers and counsels have been to me. Yes, father, I will readily obey your request, only I must be just a little ambitious first; so farewell for the present, bright dreams of home, and come forth once more, old musty tomes, you must be my sole companions for some days yet, and before we part company, our acquaintance must be deeper than it is."

He drew toward him some ponderous volumes, over which he bent, often with knitted brows, and eyes that seemed striving to penetrate the mysterious darkness that encompasses and limits human knowledge. The old, yet ever unsolved, problems that have challenged man's reason since first he looked on creation and thought of a Creator passed, one by one, in review before his eager mind, calling up the old question, "What is truth?" Among those deep quests of human thought the spirit flits with wearied wing, finding no place whereon to rest, until, like the wandering dove, it returns to the ark of safety-the only refuge that ever has proved stable-the eternal Word of God. Like the firm, unshaken rock, standing out from the ever restless, ever changing sea, so far above the flood of shifting human thought, stands the revealed Word of God, the only source of truth, the only oracle from which can be obtained a solution of the old problems touching the world, man, and man's destiny.

Long after the sounds of the city had subsided that weary head bent over these cumbrous volumes. Hour after hour dragged slowly past, till at length a bell in a neighbouring steeple chimed out the hour of two. The lamp was beginning to flicker, in token

that its supply of oil was well-nigh exhausted; the red glow had died out from the embers, which lay crumbling with a dry, husky sound in the grate.

With a weary sigh the student stretched his aching limbs, and putting from him the books, which his eyes now almost refused to read, drew toward him another Book, whose pages seemed instantly to banish the look of care from his face. And what was the message that wrought this happy effect? Only this: "Now we see, as through a glass, darkly, but then face to face."

CHAPTER X.

THE ERROLS.

Ox a gently sloping hill overlooking the valley of Dunarnon stood a pretty cottage, partly concealed by trees. It was old, and rather irregular in construction, containing a variety of odd corners, tumble-down looking gables, high chimney-stacks, and peaks of various dimensions. At one corner a window projected which commanded a view of two sides of the hill. All the other windows were small and latticed, the upper ones partially darkened by the overhanging roof. Over the trellis-work porch a creeper had been trained, whose leaves were now of a brilliant red, as were also those of the jasmine trailing over half of the front of the Altogether, it was a queer, rambling building, picturesque enough to please an artist, though abounding in details for which no modern architect could have accounted, except on the ground that the builder himself had been imbued with an artist's love of vagaries.

A plot of ground in front, ornamented with a few flower-beds, and divided by a neat gravelled walk, stretched down to a low fence, which enclosed it from the invasion of wandering cattle. Rowan and laburnum trees screened the house from view. Fruit trees rose from the garden at the back, which, though not of great extent, was well stocked and neatly kept.

In this cottage dwelt the Errols. The reader has already been introduced to two of that family, but it comprised other two members, namely Mrs. Errol and an elder son.

Mrs. Errol had been for many years a widow, her husband having died soon after the birth of her third child. With her marriage was associated a sad though romantic interest. She was a clergy-

man's daughter, without any dower but such as nature and a pious training had conferred; these sufficed, however, to win the love of Ronald Errol, who considered her beauty and simple goodness of heart of greater worth than the honours of a peerage. For he was a son of that race whose names are among the most ancient in the list of the Scottish nobility; and, although he knew that the step he was about to take in marrying one so lowly born would lead to his disinheritance, he preferred to relinquish rank and wealth rather than the object of his devoted love.

He had not calculated, however, on opposition from Mary and her father, who both foresaw the consequences of such an alliance, and bade him take the matter into fuller consideration before committing himself to a deed that would be irretrievable. This only served as an incentive to his passionate love, and educed further protestations of his contempt for empty titles and honours. Mary Gordon was more to him, he said, than an earl's coronet, whose glitter would never please him like the clear lustre of her dark, true eyes. Words like these, coupled with his handsome face and manly form, overcame the modest girl's scruples, and ere long they were married.

All through the period of his courtship the ardent lover had secretly cherished a hope that, when his father's anger abated, he would begin to relent, would wish to see the woman for whose sake his son had risked so much, and having seen her, would be forced to acknowledge that, despite her low degree, she was as worthy of his love and respect as any titled lady in the land. But events soon proved how fallacious was such a hope. The earl disowned his headstrong son, who never again crossed the threshold of his ancestral home.

Despite his efforts to conceal it, this disappointment eventually betrayed itself in a certain restlessness and bitterness that struck dismay to the heart of his young wife. She had never shared in her husband's hope of forgiveness, nor, indeed, did she suspect that he entertained it, until some time after their marriage, when she observed that he ever seemed on the alert for some tidings that never came. Not that one word indicative of this ever escaped his lips; on the contrary, he jealously guarded his secret from his wife, who divined it in virtue of the fear constantly haunting her own mind that he might one day repent of his choice.

He never did; but the loss of all the privileges and honours which had been his from infancy, the entire change of life necessitated by his want of money, in consequence of which he had to seek for employment in such spheres as his previous training pointed to—these things produced their inevitable result, and wrought a great change in the once careless, light-hearted aristocrat. Yet, in spite of this—to his honour be it said—he never changed toward the woman who had trusted him, continuing to love her to the last day of his life as fondly as he had done from their first meeting.

She, however, never ceased to reproach herself as the cause of her husband's irretrievable loss; and the consciousness that he had been so much affected by it rankled in her bosom all her days. She could not forgive herself; and this poisoned her cup of wedded happiness.

Seven years after their marriage, the young husband died, leaving her with three young children, and with very insufficient means to rear them. She had no money of her own, nor any friends in circumstances to help her; indeed, she was too proud to solicit assistance from anyone.

At this juncture relief came from a source never dreamt of.

The death of his eldest and best-loved son told heavily on the old earl, whose heart was smitten as it had never before been by the unlooked-for blow. Remorse for his past harshness and implacable resentment preyed upon his mind, until at last he resolved to make the only reparation in his power now that his son was for ever beyond the reach of his repentance.

Once, accidentally, he had seen a fair child playing in the garden of the Rev. Mr. Gordon's manse, whose beauty so resembled that of his own son when at that age, that it continued to haunt him ever afterwards. He knew well whose child it was; but pride froze the warm impulse he had felt to clasp the beautiful boy to his heart, and own him as his grandson. Now, however, sorrow melted his stem displeasure, and he did not rest until he found the place where the poor widow was struggling alone with her grief.

His appearance checked the tears that had been welling from her eyes, and she met him with a calm dignity that brought to mind the words his son had spoken when advocating her superiority, viz., that she was worthy of a coronet, despite her humble birth. Her demeanour impressed him so, that it was with difficulty he could communicate his errand; and very humbly he told her that, if she would accept of the gift, he would settle upon her an annuity sufficient to maintain her in comfort all her life.

She thanked him, but declined to accept of any aid from one who had been her husband's enemy.

The perfect courtesy of her manner, made more impressive by a certain noble pride, discomfited the earl to such an extent, that he hardly found courage to announce the second half of his mission. This was a proposal to rear and educate her younger son—the boy whose beauty had so impressed him before—with all the advantages that his late father had once enjoyed.

When she heard this latter proposal, the poor widow turned paler than before, but could not return any answer. A struggle was going on in her breast, the fiercest she had ever known, between her love for her child and the child's own interests. In that moment of conflict the thought arose in her mind, that here was an opportunity of restoring, in a manner, to her husband what he had forfeited by marrying her. Though he himself was beyond the reach of either earthly good or ill, might she not make compensation to his son by accepting this munificent offer? The boy was so like his father in nature as well as looks, and promised to be equally able to adorn a high position, would it not be cruel to stand in the way of his restoration to the privileges of which his father's marriage with one beneath his rank had deprived him? On the other hand, how could she bring herself to part with her boy?

The conflict was so severe that she begged the earl to give her a few days to consider his offer. Probably she would finally have declined it, but poverty stared her in the face, making even the maintenance of her other two children almost impossible, and at last, with a breaking heart, she surrendered the boy to his grandfather's keeping, after receiving an assurance that she should see him frequently, and have a voice in all future arrangements touching his welfare.

The succeeding years were years of incessant battling with poverty; for, true to her first decision, she refused to accept any pecuniary assistance from the earl. By dint of hard labour, in which her

faithful attendant, who had been in her service since her marriage, took a full share, the poor widow contrived to keep the wolf from the door, Her previous education, which had been of a practical kind, proved of value now, for it was by her needle she maintained herself and her children. The active servant, whose name was Betsy Heron, proved her fidelity at this crucial time by contributing all her savings to the support of the household; nor could refusals and remonstrances induce her to withdraw the generous offer. "She was willing to lay down her life," she said, "for the sake of her kind lady and the bairns"; and events fully justified the genuineness of the assertion; for, if she did not lay down her life, she devoted it wholly to that mistress and her children. Ay, even when one who had long admired her besought her to make her home with him, and be independent for the rest of her days, she declined to listen to him. urging as her reason, when dealt with by her mistress, that he was going across the seas by-andby, and she "wadna leave her ain countrie for a' the runaways in the world." So she remained to share the hardships of those she loved as "her ain folk."

During those years the mother saw from time to time her younger son, and marked with pride his increasing beauty and his courtly manners. Every visit disclosed some new feature of resemblance to his father, and she began to entertain fond dreams of a future as bright as his father's might have been but for her.

But, as time advanced, another probability began to suggest itself. The boy was growing up almost a total stranger to his brother and sister, whose education, habits, tastes and training were in all respects utterly different from his; and was there not every likelihood that time would produce a feeling of estrangement not easily to be overcome by subsequent companionship? The elder brother and sister had been educated hitherto by their mother alone, and, though they had kept pace with him, his advantages must soon place him at a point beyond the possibility of their attainment. Fortunately the boy, like his father, was a stranger to pride, and was extremely glad to return to his own family at all times, seeming to take new delight in their society at each visit; but the difference in their circumstances struck him forcibly, and made him disagreeably conscious that his life was lived on much easier terms than theirs, even although he was almost constantly at school, and subject to school discipline. It was therefore almost unavoidable that this wide difference in their circumstances should produce a certain estrangement between the favoured member of the family and the others.

Time went on, and wrought an amelioration in the widow's circumstances so far, that she was able to send her son and daughter to a school where they obtained a thoroughly sound education, and also to live somewhat more comfortably than hitherto. But at this period the hand that had toiled so diligently was arrested by illness, and the breadwinner was laid aside. What was to be done? Who could take up the suspended work?

The case seemed hopeless, but there was one in the household whose character had been developing secretly, and who now proved herself the true daughter of such a mother. Without any delay Mary gave up school, and quietly set herself to the task which Mrs. Errol was no longer able to perform. Night after night, when all the others were asleep, she sat sewing by lamplight, till her fingers became so numbed that she could scarcely ply her needle. So quietly was this done that none suspected she was robbing herself of necessary rest. Happily Mrs. Errol recovered sufficiently to resume part of her task, though she never again seemed so strong as before.

About this period an event occurred which was destined to affect the destiny of the Errols in no small degree.

At the school he was attending in Lynnburgh young Ronald Errol had made the acquaintance of a boy with a pure, seraph-like face and gentle demeanour, who, seeing he laboured under certain disadvantages in his tasks, proved himself a friend indeed by rendering efficient help to his friend in need. From this act of kindness sprang a closer intimacy, in the course of which each made a confidant of the other, and disclosed, as boys do, many particulars of a strictly private nature. The benefactor, whose name was Dunbar, said his father was a minister, and lived at a quiet place by the sea called Glenathole, which was not far distant, though Ronald had never been there. He had little else to communicate, except that his father seut him to school at Lynnburgh because there was no good school at home.

Ronald had much more to impart, though a natural pride prevented him from betraying his poverty. He said his mother had been left a widow when they were all young (implying, of course, that his age of fourteen and a half was quite an advanced one), and that not caring to remain in the old place, she had come to Lynnburgh; that his younger brother was a favourite with Lord Errol, who would hardly let him home at all, and a few more particulars of a kind likely to guard against any discovery of their straitened means by his new friend.

Despite those precautions, however, this friend soon detected the true state of affairs, and announced his discovery to his father, who, to his surprise, took a lively interest in the story, and imparted it to Sir Edward Douglas, who had heard of the ill-fated marriage which had entailed such sad consequences on Mrs. Errol, whom he, in agreement with Mr. Dunbar, conjectured to be this widow with whose son young Dunbar had become acquainted, and he heartily entered into the minister's plan for their relief. This was to place at their disposal Cliff Cottage, which was then unlet, for a very small rent, so as not to seem merely the agents of charity. Mr. Dunbar was certain, from various remarks made regarding the family by his son, that, unless special care were taken to prevent it, Mrs. Errol would suspect their real motive, and decline to sacrifice her independence. The difficulty was how to approach her at all on the subject. It was evident this could only be done through Raymond, who might be entrusted with the secret to a certain extent. Accordingly, by his means, the news of the house to be had at Glenathole for such a small rent was conveyed to Ronald, and by Ronald to his mother. who, attributing the suggestion of their going thither to a boy's wish to have his school-mate near him, consented that, in the first place, Ronald and Betsy might go and see the house and the place.

The report they brought back was so encouraging, that Mrs. Errol, whose health evidently demanded some change of air and scene, was induced to pay a visit to Glenathole; and, having made all necessary inquiries, she finally agreed to take Cliff Cottage, which Mr. Dunbar, acting in the capacity of Sir Edward Douglas's factor, as it appeared, immediately placed at her disposal.

To Glenathole they accordingly removed; and from that time their fortunes began to brighten. Ronald still continued to attend school at Lynnburgh along with his friend, young Dunbar, until he had reached his fifteenth year, when, through the recommendation of old Mr. Dunbar, he obtained employment in a large shipping establishment in Lynnburgh. Here his sharp intelligence and manly self-reliance soon brought him into notice, and he steadily rose until he was in a position to maintain his mother and sister without any more drudgery on their part.

Meanwhile, the visits of the favoured son had become less frequent. He had entered on his studies at Oxford, from which letters came at intervals filled with glowing descriptions of the grand free life he was leading there, and of the many delightful friendships he had formed among his fellow-students. It was evident from these letters that his ambition was of a high order, and that he hoped one day to prove himself worthy of his grandfather's patronage. Yet, with all this. there was no self-praise, much less any appearance of wishing to show himself superior to the other members of his family: it was only that he never seemed to realise their hard position, or his own privileges in comparison with their straitened circumstances. In this Mrs. Errol traced a new point of resemblance to his light-hearted father, who had ever seemed encompassed with an atmosphere of brightness that kept him aloof from the gloom of ordinary misfortune; and she rejoiced at the prospect of her son being one day in a position such as he would have had but for his father's imprudence.

But, alas! this bright dream was now to be suddenly dispelled. Lord Errol was, without warning, struck down by a shock of paralysis, from which he never recovered; and it was found that he had made no provision for his grandson. Thus, at one stroke, poor Kenneth Errol found himself deprived of all means of support. For the other members of Lord Errol's family, who had always resented the patronage shown to the son of an outcast, refused to countenance the interloper, and bade him henceforth consider their connection at an end.

In much distress he communicated the mournful news to his mother, who immediately summoned him home, saying she had discovered one opening out of the difficulty, which, however, she feared he would hardly think worthy of a moment's consideration, after the destruction of prospects so brilliant as his had been.

This proved to be the offer of a situation in the custom-house. As his mother had supposed, such an offer was not likely to meet with an enthusiastic reception from the favoured youth, whose dreams had soared so high; but, as there appeared no more eligible post to be had, and, in lieu of his kind patron's support, no application for more genteel appointments could meet with success, he was compelled in desperation to accept of it.

Yet, desperate as his circumstances were, there is every probability that he would ere long have resigned this post but for two circumstances which tended materially to reconcile him to his altered life. One of these was his introduction to Harry Douglas, who speedily conceived an enthusiastic attachment to the handsome youth, whose manners and disposition possessed a charm there was no resisting. From this intimacy sprang one yet wider with the family at the castle, among whom the newcomer soon made himself a universal favourite. In regard to one, at least, we have seen that he exerted an influence of a much deeper kind, which promised, even more than Lord Errol's patronage had done, to secure the fortune of the happy suitor.

The other circumstance which produced a marked change in Kenneth's views of his new life was his growing intimacy with Mr. Lesly, who, occupying the most important position in the custom-house, seemed anxious to encourage the young man, and to assist him as far as possible, aware, of course, that the patronage of Sir Edward Douglas had secured him the situation. He was evidently attracted toward him by his obliging, winning manners and good looks, and made himself so much his friend, that the young man gave him his confidence at once, warmly reciprocating his friendly overtures. Time ripened the intimacy, until, at the period at which our story opens, Mr. Lesly seemed to have acquired a sort of fascination over his friend, against which the remonstrances of Mrs. Errol and Mary could not prevail.

The reader has already heard one of these remonstrances made by the latter, and has observed that it ended with an admission on her part that she could assign no specific reason for her dislike of Mr. Lesly. And this constituted the weak point in all their arguments to dissuade Kenneth from further intimacy with this man: they suspected him, but could not tell why. They only knew that Kenneth was changing, slowly and almost imperceptibly, yet surely changing, and not for the better. It was becoming apparent that his engagements with Mr. Lesly superseded all others; and that the more this intimacy increased, the less he confided in them. A certain indefinable constraint marked his demeanour toward those of his own home at times, making them painfully conscious that some barrier had been raised, invisible, yet stronger than iron, between his heart and theirs. His full confidence was withdrawn, as if a secret lurked in his bosom which had to be guarded from their inquiring eyes. Nevertheless, his unabated kindness, his charming gaiety, and irresistible, winning ways, were such as almost to banish doubts of him; indeed, there were times when these doubts were put to shame by his playful, innocent mirth, and happy, lovable disposition.

Now, at least, they must take flight, for a more potent spell was over him than even Mr. Lesly's friendship: he was the plighted lover of Ada Douglas.

CHAPTER XI.

IN THE GLOAMIN'.

GLENATHOLE lay basking in the golden morning light. It was early, and as yet no one was astir; but from the houses in the village blue wreaths of smoke were ascending and melting into air. Even nature seemed in repose. The sea spread wide and far to the horizon, smooth as a silver mirror, and glittering as if showers of diamonds were falling on its surface. The soft breeze that stirred the air hardly sufficed to waft the gossamer clouds floating in the serene sky. A purple haze clothed the distant hills, upon which the lights and shadows were for ever changing. Far out on the horizon a few ships were visible, whose white sails gleamed like sea-birds' wings. The sea-birds themselves hovered lingeringly over the bosom of the water, their wild note the only sound to be heard.

The whole aspect of the scene was one of repose; an aspect well befitting the day of rest, when, the world's clamour hushed for a while, man can listen to those deeper, quieter voices that speak of a life to come.

Erewhile the stillness that brooded over the valley of Dunarnon was broken by the clear, musical sound of a bell, whose cadence rose and fell on the breeze. Presently from the village and the scattered dwellings of the neighbourhood people might have been seen flocking in groups toward the path which wound up to the church.

This building occupied a level ridge near the top of the hill, and was surrounded by some trees, above which rose its grey tower. The style of architecture pointed to a remote age, to that stormy time, indeed, when builders aimed at stability rather than ornament. The thickness of the walls, the heavy buttresses, the massive porch ornamented with griffins' heads, the narrow, pointed windows, and sharply arched gables, all betokened its extreme antiquity. Yet there was a certain rude grace about the structure that redeemed it from the air of gloom which, in common with similar edifices of mediæval times, it possessed; a characteristic of the religions tendency of that period, when the ascetic element in Christianity preponderated, imparting itself even to the places of worship erected in that age.

Along one entire side a mantle of ivy spread, whose dark drapery half concealed the narrow slits of windows, while increasing the sombre aspect of the interior. Here, too, the high-backed pews, blackened with age, suggested the ascetic tendency of mediæval times, for they seemed specially contrived for the discomfort of the worshippers. The lofty pulpit was of the same ebon hue, as were also the arches supporting the roof. These arches, however, were now gilded by the shafts of sunlight that fell athwart them through the narrow windows and the open door.

The people had begun to assemble, and were gravely seating themselves in the solemn-looking pews, awaiting the entrance of their pastor.

Into a pew near the door stepped four people; an elderly lady, in widow's attire, a young lady, and two young men, so very unlike in appearance that one could hardly believe them brothers. These were the Errols from Cliff Cottage.

As the last note of the bell died away, another group entered the church, and passed down the aisle to a pew alongside the wall, near the pulpit. It consisted of Sir Edward and Lady Douglas and their family.

As they seated themselves in the old pew where

for centuries their ancestors had worshipped, many an eye watched them with kindly pride; but there was one among the group whose fair, sweet face alone might have kindled such a feeling. Like the pure angel faces that look out from Raphael's dark canvas, so from the prevailing gloom of her surroundings looked out the face of Ada Douglas, lit this morning with a radiance brighter than that which a beam of sunshine cast upon it from above. As she turned in the direction of the Errols' pew, a delicate rose-flush overspread her cheek, called there by one glance from a deep-blue eye that was fixed in meaning earnestness upon her. She knew her lover was gazing on her, even when she saw him not; and a thrill of rapturous joy coursed through her veins, making her conscious of no other presence save his.

It was the hour for service to begin, and all eyes were turned to the door by which Mr. Dunbar always entered. On this occasion he was a little late; but they had scarcely begun to remark the circumstance when the venerable old man appeared and slowly ascended the pulpit stairs.

Well did his aged form accord with that sacred place. A gleam of sunshine falling upon his silver-white hair transformed it into a halo of brightness, and cast a radiance over the calm countenance, so like, in its deep restfulness, to those of the pictured saints one sees in old cathedrals. None could fail to be impressed by his bearing, so dignified, and withal so reverent and humble; the very toues of his voice, as he read over the words of the psalm to be sung, had in them a sympathetic, solemn earnestness calculated to awaken reverential feeling in all who heard them.

As he repeated the first two lines of the verses to be sung, and the congregation was about to rise, Mary Errol's gaze wandered from him to his family pew. As usual, old Peggy, grim and awful, sat at one end of it; but there was another occupant, whose presence there, unexpected as it was, caused Mary's heart to leap, and her colour to rise. Well she knew that pale, beautiful face; the noble, intellectual brow, over which clustered dark, wavy hair; the clearly pencilled eyebrows and long drooping lashes, shading two deep, lustrous eyes; and the sensitive, melancholy mouth, with its red, mobile lips; every feature was engraven on the tablets of her memory. But it was not so much the features as the expression they bore that

riveted her attention. A spiritual beauty shone there, radiating from the pure soul within, that lent the features a greater charm than merely their perfect harmony.

As if her look had spoken to him, Raymond raised his dark eyes, and met Mary's fixed upon him with an anxious, inquiring scrutiny. He read their language; and a quiet smile flickered on his lips, while his pale cheek flushed slightly out no further sign of recognition passed between them.

The service went on-a service impressive from its very simplicity. The minister spoke as a dying man to dying men, urging his hearers to make sure of their eternal salvation "while the evil days come not"; to listen to that offer of wondrous love made by a God of love to a perishing world. He spoke like one who knew well the value of the blessing he pressed upon them for their acceptance; his message to them of spiritual realities was like that of one who had long been familiar with them. At times he rose to bursts of cloquence as he dwelt upon the divine love as shown in that sacrifice on Calvary, or upon the house of many mansions, to which he seemed to be himself so near; and at such times his very countenance wore an illumination reminding those who beheld it of that with which the face of Moses shone when he came down from the mount.

With a plaintive sweetness the old psalm tunes floated upwards among the arches as the people began to sing. Above all other voices might have been distinguished that of Ada Douglas, whose pure, clear notes were wont to charm the ear of old Mr. Dunbar as he lay back in his pulpit to listen. Perhaps they reminded him of a voice long hushed, that was now raised in angels' songs.

When the benediction had been pronounced, the people passed quietly out into the warm sunshine; for, although it was now November, the days were unusually bright, almost beguiling one into the belief that winter had relented, and was going to allow summer to return. Some lingered in groups about "the auld kirkyard," where many of their friends were sleeping, others repaired to their homes in the village, while a few remained about the porch, waiting to express a few kindly words of welcome to the minister's son.

Mr. Dunbar and Raymond presently appeared. The old man's face was all aglow as he observed the enthusiastic reception accorded to his son by the Douglases, the Errols, and the other friends gathered round him. Many were the kind words addressed to him, but Raymond's eye wandered somewhat restlessly until it lighted on Mary, who stood furthest aloof of all. In a moment he was by her side; and, although no other token of their mutual pleasure was observable except a firm, close pressure of the hand, each saw in the other's eyes a language that made words superfluous.

Mr. Dunbar presently joined them, saying-

"In case I forget, Miss Mary, will you call to-morrowany time on the Macdonalds at Burnside? Charley would like to see you again; poor laddie, he grows impatient under his long confinement, and he has little to amuse himself with yonder; no one seems to cheer him as you do. I told him I would deliver his message to you."

"Thank you, Mr. Dunbar; I will go to-morrow afternoon," said Mary, as she parted from him, and received another warm shake of the hand from Raymond.

Faithful to her promise, Mary set out next day to visit the sick boy at Burnside, a farm situated on a rising ground about three miles from the village. It was already afternoon when she left home, and, as the days were now nearly at the shortest, she made haste so as to get back before darkness settled down. In her hand she carried a basket containing some hothouse flowers and a bunch of Muscatel grapes which had been sent to her from Douglas Castle.

Night was closing in when she began her homeward walk; but, as the sky was clear and the moon slowly rising, she congratulated herself on the prospect of a pleasant evening stroll. Indeed, the moonlight broke out so clear and full that, in preference to the more direct path, she took one that led down to the shore, where she could enjoy the sight of the moonlight on the water. Mary dearly loved the ocean, and was fond of rambling on the beach by herself, sometimes with a book for company. On this inviting night she was resolved to indulge her fancy, so quickened her speed until she gained the strand.

There she stood still, her eyes revelling in the glorious prospect of the moonlit ocean, with the encircling range of black rugged cliffs. She traced the glittering path of silver across the shimmering waves to the horizon; but, while her gaze traversed

the bright line, a dark object crossed it about midway. It was a ship, and from its mast-head a reddish light flashed once or twice. Against the radiant background it appeared like a phantom ship for a few minutes, then vanished.

But the tide was coming in, and she hastened on. Soon, however, she halted once more at the sound of approaching footsteps. It was Raymond Dunbar, and his sudden appearance caused such rapid transition from terror to joy, that she could hardly greet him with any composure.

"I thought I should find you here," he said, as he shook hands. "They told me you had gone to Burnside, and, as I was too late to accompany you, I resolved to waylay you here, remembering your old preference for the shore. But why does your hand tremble so? Did I startle you by coming on you too suddenly just now?"

"I was thinking of the smugglers, and feared you were one of them," answered Mary, recovering herself. "I got a scare once before here, which makes me apprehensive. Mother would say I deserved it for slighting her advice."

"Well, I am disposed to concur in her objection," returned Raymond; "I think this is hardly a safe place for you at night. My father tells me the coast is more infested with these desperadoes than ever; and I should not like you to be carried off some night to be a brigand's wife."

As he spoke these last words he drew her arm within his own, as if he would protect her from that and every other possible danger; and although he spoke in jest, she detected a deeper meaning in his words.

Presently he resumed: "I think I took you all by surprise yesterday in church. Father himself did not know I was coming, until I stepped into the manse on Saturday night. You should have seen his face, Mary, when I walked into the study, where he was so deep in his sermon, that I had to speak twice before he noticed me! And even old Peggy, though she tried to scold me for coming home without a word of warning, failed utterly, and bestowed on me a hug that reminded me of bygone days."

Mary joined in his laugh, and said,-

"They have missed you very much. I knew they would be glad to see you home again."

"And are you glad, Mary?" he asked, pressing

the imprisoned arm closer to his side, and bending over her with loving tenderness.

The question, though abrupt, was put so quietly and gently that it did not greatly startle her. For years they had loved each other, and although no declaration of love had ever passed between them, their mutual understanding made such a declaration unnecessary. When sorrow and hardship encompassed the Errols, Raymond had brought hope and happiness within their reach, and won the love and gratitude of them all; but, from the first day of their meeting, an attachment was formed between the generous boy and Mary Errol, which deepened with time into that heart-union which is more akin to friendship, as expressed in Aristotle's definition, "one soul in two bodies."

As quietly, therefore, as the question had been asked, she replied, with a smile more eloquent than words.—

"You need scarcely ask me that: you know I am glad."

He thanked her by a closer pressure of the arm, and, after a pause said—

"Mary, this walk here on the sands reminds me of many another walk we have had together in former days, when we scarcely knew why we were so happy in each other's company, have grown up to be man and woman side by side, and during all these years we have scarcely ever had a difference. You have been my good angel, Mary, all through; your pure influence has shielded me from many a temptation; you have become so necessary to my happiness that I want you to be my wife, and help me all my days. I have loved you, and you only, since first we met; and I came here to-night to tell you this, though I think you must have known it already, and to ask you to marry me. Perhaps I should have waited until my prospects were more certain; but I wanted to make sure of you, Mary; and I felt that your consent would help me faster toward success. Now, answer me, Mary, and tell me if you are willing to entrust your happiness to me."

He waited in breathless suspense for her reply, which it seemed to cost her an effort to give. Her head was bent, and he could see she was more agitated than she had ever before been in his presence. He thought, too, that something that flashed like a diamond fell down her cheek. But when she spoke, her voice was calm and steady.

"If I had only myself to think of, Raymond, my answer would be easy, for there is no one else in the world I have such perfect confidence in as you; but I cannot forget mother. I could not leave her, she depends so much on me; and, when my brothers marry, as they likely will, she will need me more than ever. She has struggled so bravely for our sakes in the past, that it would be cruel to think of leaving her now."

"But, Mary, I don't ask you to do that," explained Raymond, in kind, reassuring tones. "I don't expect to be in a position to marry for some years to come, my studies are far from complete yet; but, when I do marry, my intention is to settle in the old place, and take up my father's work. He would like it, and the people have been always so kindly disposed to me, that I don't think they would object. So that you would not require to go farther from home than the manse, and we could surely make room for your mother. She would scarcely feel herself a stranger in our home, knowing me so intimately from childhood, and you may be sure I would do my utmost to be a good son to her."

"I know it, Raymond; and yet-"

"Yet what, Mary? Tell me your difficulty, and see if I cannot solve it."

"There is another consideration; one that I could not shut my eyes to, even if you were more generous than you are."

"What is it?"

"We have been so much like brother and sister, and you have seen so little of the world that it might be better not to bind yourself by any engagement just now, until—"

"I know what you mean, Mary; but if you think that because I have not mingled much in the world, I am uncertain about the real state of my affection towards you, you do me a great injustice. Ought I not just as well to press that consideration upon you? Why should I believe you less likely to change than myself? Suppose I were to look around me even in this sequestered place, is there no possible rival ready to contest the prize of your hand? Mary," he suddenly broke off, in graver tones and with anxious looks, "since you have started the doubt, let me ask you one question; perhaps I have no right to ask it, but at such a time there should be no reserve. Has Harry Douglas ever spoken to you of love?"

Mary met his eager look with her honest, fearless eyes as she answered—

"Never."

"Thank you, Mary; you have relieved me of a fear that has troubled me at times, when I saw him paying you attention. I can't blame him for admiring you, but if his admiration should exceed a certain point, you don't know how savage I should be. You see, Mary, I have always regarded you as my very own, even before I had the least right, and, consequently, was disposed to be jealous of any fancied claimant to my privilege."

"I don't think anyone was ever foolish enough to admire me except yourself. Certainly Harry Douglas has seen too many court beauties to bestow

a thought on me."

"I'm not so sure of that."

"It is quite true, nevertheless. It was his friendship for Kenneth that made him take any notice of me."

"You depreciate yourself to such an extent, Mary, that you never suppose others may not be disposed to rate you at your own price. However, I am only too glad to think you don't admire young Douglas as much as I am very sure he admires you. And, now that we are nearing home, let me have a plain answer to my question. Will you grant me leave to call on Mrs. Errol to-morrow and ask her consent to my suit?"

Mary blushed, but she smiled as well as she replied, with a touch of characteristic humour—

"Well, yes, if you're not afraid of a scolding."

"For proposing to steal you—ch?" laughingly asked Raymond as his arm encircled her waist. "My darling," he added, in deep, thrilling tones, "you seem so much a part of myself that I can hardly be said to steal you at all."

He drew her into his arms, and kissed her. And, as she looked up into his noble, gentle face, she felt that her happiness was in safe keeping. So deep and restful was the trust he inspired, that she was ready to meet the world's roughest treatment at his side, and equally ready, should it be so decreed, to meet it all alone, believing that, whether absent or present, his love must encompass her like a shield.

They had now almost reached the sweep of sandy beach on which the fishermen's boats lay, and which a projecting ridge of rock concealed from view. Raymond was assisting Mary over the loose stones, too intent on her safety to notice anything else, when she suddenly stopped, and looked with an expression so strange at a point immediately in front, that Raymond, apprehending danger from smugglers or some equally formidable source, turned in the direction of her gaze.

It was a solitary individual, who, so far from molesting them, courteously raised his hat in salutation, and passed quietly by.

Raymond's eyes reverted to his companion's face, whose singularly stern expression checked the smile on his own.

"Why, Mary, it was only Mr. Lesly; what makes you look so severe?" he inquired in some perplexity.

"I saw him," was her brief response.

"But why should his presence have such an unhappy effect on you? I never saw you change so quickly before as you did just now when he appeared."

"I fear that man, Raymond."

"Fear him, Mary? What can you mean? thought he was your brother's intimate friend?"

"Yes; it is on that account I fear him. I am now convinced that his influence over Kenneth is exerted for no good ends. Both mother and I have suspected it for some time; we are sure of it now."

"But what leads you to suppose this? Personally, I am unacquainted with him, so that my opinion of his character is pretty much a matter of surmise. My father, I know, observes a significant silence on the subject, which inclines me to suppose he shares in your doubts; but he always seemed to me a very gentlemanly person, and as for your brother Kenneth, he monopolised him altogether, and seemed truly attached to him. What has he done to raise your suspicion?"

"I cannot lay any definite charge against him. I only know that Kenneth has not been the same as he used to be since he became so intimate with him. He has seemed to care less for home, and more for society. Indeed, I cannot describe the change, but it is there. However," she added, with a revival of her wonted hopefulness, "I think my fears should be at an end, for Kenneth has made another friend, whose influence promises to eclipse all others, and for her sake I am sure he will think no more of associates like Mr. Lesly."

"And who is that friend, may I ask?"

"Can you not guess?"

"Anyone at Douglas Castle?"

"Ves."

"I fancied it would be so. I used to notice that, when your brother came into church, Miss Douglas would blush like a rose, and whenever he turned in her direction she averted her face. I thought these symptoms were pretty suggestive of such a result as you have mentioned; and I am very glad it has come to pass, for his sake specially. I think you may set your mind at rest about him: with such a charming friend as Miss Ada Douglas, he is not likely to think much of any other, particularly if she forbids it, as probably she will. I hope to congratulate him soon on his good fortune, and shall expect similar congratulations from him. May I not, Mary?"

"You must hear what mother has got to say first," laughed Mary.

"By all means. When shall I come to-morrow?"

"Any time you choose. Only, you must be prepared to find mother alone."

"Why?" inquired Raymond, seeking to detain her as she was disengaging her hand, and preparing to take leave of him at the foot of the hill, which they had now reached.

"Because I think she will deliver you a lecture on the general inferiority of man, which my presence might spoil. Now, good-night."

"No; not such a cold good-night as that," he answered, stooping down to kiss her blushing face; "remember, henceforth I'll exact this privilege, for you belong to me."

"Yet, what if your new possession brings you sorrow with it?" she asked, gazing upwards, with her face pinioned between his hands.

"What do you mean, Mary?"

"If I am to be yours, my troubles will be yours also."

"And would I wish it otherwise?" he questioned, his features wearing a beautiful smile, half-reproachful, half-appealing. "No, Mary," he continued, with impassioned earnestness, "God willing, we shall travel our life-journey together; and no care shall reach you that I can ward off; but what cares and griefs you *must* endure shall be shared by me. We have but one life between us now; may God's blessing be on it now and for evermore."

"Amen!" she softly responded, and they parted with that good prayer in their hearts.

(To be continued.)

THE ATALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

Subject for December-- 'Is the so-called 'Rational Dress' an improvement on the present style of womanly apparel?" Papers not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before December 23rd. The best paper on either side will be published in the magazine.

READING UNION AND SCHOOL OF FICTION.

Give an estimate of the character of Queen Catherine in Henry VIII. Write a Vilanelle on Joy. Give character sketch of girl awaiting arrival of her lover after a long absence; indicate scene and circumstances. (Members need only enter for one of these subjects. Reply papers not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before December 2 3rd.)

ANSWERS TO SEARCH OUESTIONS (NOVEMBER).

1. In Prometheus Unbound (Iona). Act i. 2. Shelley.

1. Shelley, Fragments.

2. King Richard II., Act iii. scene ii., Shakespeare.

r. Milton. 2. Milton.

t. Byron, 2, Of Kirke White.

1. Edward Young. 2. Of Voltaire.

1. Pietro Bembo. 2. Churchill. 3. Lucie Manette. In A Tale of Two Cities. Dickens.

SEARCH QUESTIONS (DECEMBER).

1. What is meant by the Nucta or Miraculous Drop, and where is it mentioned?

2. What is the following quotation from ?-

"The shadows of the forest Are about the lady now: She is hurrying through the midnight on, Beneath the dark pine-bough."

1. Give the authors of the following quotations -

"Oh! 'tis the heart that magnifies this life, Making a truth and beauty of its own,"

"Oh, night.

And storm and darkness! ye are wondrous stron ; Yet lovely in your strength.

"The beautiful is vanished, and returns not,"

"They learn in suffering, what they teach in son;"

1. Who wrote the following lines?-

"Hail, King of Shreds and Patches, hail, Disperser of the Poor! Thou dog in office, set to bark All beggars from the door!"

2. To whom was it addressed?

3. Who was the author of these lines, and in which of his works do they occur?

> "Twist ye, twine ye; even so, Mingle shades of joy and woe Hope, and fear, and peace, and strife, In the thread of human life."

1. What two characters are described as meeting thus?-

"They met like friends who part in pain, And meet in doubtful hope again.

2. Gire author and work,

Who was Tho, Woolston?

2. In what work is he mentioned?

3. By whom was this epitaph written? -

"Under this marble, or under this sill, Or under this turf, or e'en what they will: Whatever an heir, or a friend in his stead, Or any good creature shall lay o'er my head,

Lies one who ne'er cared, and still cares not a pin, What they said, or may say, of the mortal within; But, who living and dying, serene still and free, Trusts in God, that as well as he was, he shall be."

1. What character sings thus?-

"He is dead and gone, lady, He is dead and gone,

At his head a grass-green turf, At his heels a stone."

1. Where are the following quotations found?-

"Ask me no more; thy fate and mine are seal'd; I strove against the stream and all in vain: Let the great river take me to the main:

No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;

Ask me no more.'

"I know the way she went Home with her maiden posy, For her feet have touched the meadows And left the daisies rosy."

1. Fill in the name of the personage here described :-

"____ had a bald head and light hair, a short whisker cut to his cheek, a buff waistcoat, very neat boots and hands. He looked like the Portrait of a Gentleman at the Exhibition, as the worthy is represented: dignified in attitude, bland, smiling, and statesmanlike, sitting at a table unsealing letters, with a despatch-box and a silver inkstand before him, a column and a scarlet curtain behind, and a park in the distance, with a great thunderstorm lowering in the sky.'







By MRS. HUNGERFORD,

Author of "Molly Bazen," "Phyllis," "The Hoyden," &c.

CHAPTER XII.

"The salt marsh bears no spikenard,
Waste on it no good seed;
Kindness to evil people
Does good ones an ill deed."

WHEN left alone, Mowbray's face changes.

Again he sinks into deep thought; again the knowledge of Paul Swindon's unworthiness rises before him in all its horrible clearness. No! never shall he desecrate the halls of this old house—this honourable house—by his presence and the presence of—

His latest detestable act has damned him for ever in the old lord's sight.

His mind goes instinctively from these indignant thoughts of Swindon to Victor. How upright, how wholesome, the latter seems beside the nephew he had selected as his heir. But that is all over now. He has quite decided, and in time! He sighs. There is so little time.

What a desirable heir Victor is. He had been conscious of some anxiety when the boy had blushed as he did over Madge Grace's name. He —Mowbray—had not understood for a moment, but—afterwards—he had known, and it had been a relief to him after all the bad news of Paul, to hear that "the lad," as he calls him, has fallen in love openly, happily, with Madge Grace, the daughter of an old friend—a girl of good birth and social standing.

But his will made in favour of Paul! Well, it is not too late yet to cancel that.

He goes to the writing table, and pulls forward paper and ink. With an impatient hand he turns up the lamp. Then writes—writes fiercely for quite an hour. Always impulsive, he now feels as if what he has got to do can never be done quickly enough.

Presently it is finished, and he flings himself back in his chair, thinking. Yes, it is well done. He feels that. And now for witnesses. Happening to glance out of the window, still open to let in the cool airs of the night, he sees coming across the garden the waif that Victor has elected to be his future henchman. A waif transformed. Victor's old suit seems to fit him to a nicety, and Victor's old hairbrush has done wonderful things to his head.

Perhaps Victor's impromptu meal, that was not old, has done even more for him. Anyway he looks quite set up, and if there is about him the air of one who is walking in strange places, and is conscious of it, it is tempered with a sort of courage born of that late much-wanted food. Hunger is at an end, and the wretched boy feels himself once again able to meet his fellows. There is something more, too, in his breast that helps him to this courage. His wild, passionate nature, that has a good deal of gipsy blood in it, is on fire with grati-

tude to the man who had held out a hand to lift him from the sloughs of life to a firm landing place—who had, in the face of his very crime, given him a chance of holding up his head again amongst his kind.

Mowbray going to the window, beckons him by a finger to come in, and Matt, who had been told by Victor of the old lord's return, obeys the gesture at once.

"You can write your name, perhaps?" says Mowbray.

"I can that," says Matt, sullenly, and with few flowers of language.

"You can write it here, then," indicating the spot where a witness would sign a will.

"What's it for?" asks the waif.

Lord Mowbray looks at him.

"For Mr. Mowbray," says he.

"Then I won't," backing away from him. "If it's against the young master——"

"Why it's for him, fool."

"Ah, if you'll swear to that."

"1 shall with pleasure," says Mowbray, laughing. This new importation of Victor's is abominably rude, but his honest gratitude that shows through his determination to defy even him, Mowbray, because of it, anuses the old lord. Anyway, there is nothing cringing about the lad.

"It is certainly nothing against the 'young master,' as you call him," says he, with a faintly satirical smile, that yet has great kindness in it. "If you sign this paper here," pointing to it, "it will give happiness to him, of a sort," with a sharp sigh. Had money or position given happiness to him?

"And before long, too," sadly. "He won't have long to wait for it, boy—not long."

The sad premonition of death is already upon him.

Matt has come forward and has taken the pen in his fingers.

"You're sure," says he, with a searching glance at Mowbray, "that it's all for the good of him?"

"For my nephew?--yes."

"I wish I could read," says Matt. ungracious to the last, and hesitating still. "But I can't—all I can do is to sign my name."

"A most useful accomplishment, and better than being able to sign another's name," says Mowbray, drily; especially in his state of life, thinks he to himself—forgery bringing its own dividends—at times. "You must, however, wait a moment; there is another preliminary to be gone through." He rings the bell, and presently the butler appears. A stout, solid man, with few ideas. Butlers never have any ideas of their own. Even so long ago as Joseph's time they could not work out an idea on their own dreams, they had to get Joseph to help them.

"I want you to sign this," says Lord Mowbray, pointing to the paper before him.

"Yes, my lord," says Mason, who, besides having no ideas, is much too well-mannered a servant to question an act of his superiors.

"You can sit here," says Mowbray, slowly.

"Thank you, my lord." Mason slowly and heavily seats himself in his master's own chair.

"It is my will," says Mowbray.

"Very good, my lord," says Mason, and without further preamble signs his name.

"Now you," says Mowbray, nodding at Matt. The latter comes forward, leans down, grapples with his pen as though it is a firearm of some sort, warranted to go off at a moment's notice, and at last signs his name in such a style, as precludes the idea of forgery of any sort, at any time. Forgery, indeed, seems very much out of it. Practically impossible, in fact.

The signature, for all that, is a sound one; and as a curious commentary on Mowbray's suspicious thought—one very difficult of imitation.

"Thank you," says Mowbray, with a general expression of courtesy to both men. Then—"Bring me some coffee, Mason."

As Mason withdraws, Lord Mowbray rises to his feet. He has folded the paper just signed, and holding it lightly between his finger and thumb, looks at Matt.

"It will be necessary that you should say nothing of this to your master," begins he. He waits—he is undecided—now, at the last moment (he has all his life been undecided) he would willingly have undone his last deed. If, later on, he should wish to discard Victor as his heir—he has perhaps been too sudden—too precipitate. Not Swindon, certainly. Swindon shall never be his heir; but—there may be others—and it is well to leave a margin to prevent false hopes.

"Not a word!—do you hear?—of this paper. If you speak, it will do Mr. Mowbray probably a

greater injury than it you had never known it. After my death—then. And I have told you, you will not have long to wait. But meantime, if you do speak, it will be to his hurt, and his alone."

He makes a gesture, imperious, hasty, that the waif is swift to obey; but old instincts are hard to conquer, and once behind the trellis-work on the balcony outside, and with a hole in the verdant mass of beauty through which he can see what is going on in the room he has just quitted, he stops short, and gives himself up to the moment.

It is a disgraceful pose, yet there is something of a great loyalty in it, too. *Self* is not in it, at all events. The young master! What is it the old man means about him?

He watches the "old man" assiduously. Now he has folded up the paper, and now he goes towards the wall over there. Mystery seems full upon the air. Matt remembers suddenly his promise to Lord Mowbray not to speak, and the old lord's hint that if he did speak it might mean ill to his patron. No doubt, Mowbray had given way to a touch of cynical humour when he said that, but the boy had not understood him, and was struck with it. What he does understand, however, is the going of Mowbray to the wall over there.

He goes so straight for it that Matt grows suddenly conscious of a keen sense of disappointment. Why, he can't be thinking of marching through it, can he? The "old man" must be mad, and, therefore, his promise that the signed paper will do good to the young master will, after all, come probably to nothing. To march deliberately towards a blank wall!

Even as he so scorns Mowbray, the latter raises his hand, and touches the seemingly impregnable wall. Upon a small red flower his finger presses, and Matt leans forward, just for curiosity sake, just to see how far "th' old fool" will go—and lo! all at once the solid wall moves open.

A door—a small door, sways open, worked by a secret spring, no doubt. Matt leans still more forward, the veins growing in his forehead. Uneducated—superstitious—this opening of a wall at a touch seems horrible to him. And "th' old man"—if he could do that—why, he could do many other things. And he had threatened him, that if he spoke of this written paper before his death, he would avenge it on the young master!

He knows at once, in a dull sort of way, that he will never speak—till then.

He is watching always! When the wall opened, Mowbray had seemed to put his head into it, and presently had come forth again, dragging a paper with him. This he now tears into many parts. The waif, watching him, begins to tremble. It seems like the act of a demon!

What is he? Who?

And now he has taken up the paper he, Matt, has just signed, and lays it in the mysterious opening from which he had taken the strange parchment he had only just this moment torn into shreds.

After this he touches another part of the wall, and in a flash the wall is as it always was—not a break—not a suspicion of secrecy about it!

It is too much for Matt. He draws back with a pale and frightened face. He has heard of magicians! But to see one! He creeps silently away; but the memory of that red flower has entered into his brain.

Mowbray coming back to his chair—a lounging one—this time flings himself into it and lights a cigar.

This thing done—this will witnessed—he knows a sense of relief. But now Stamer should have it in his possession, so as to make the whole thing sure. But Stamer! That is what oppresses him. Why, Stamer can't be got at for quite a month or so, and this detestable climate will send him back to Italy again in a week. He and Stamer had crossed each other on his return this time. Caught a mere glimpse one of the other—a bare half-hour—but long enough for Mowbray to understand the drift of Stamer's letters about Swindon and—a great deal more. Stamer was to be relied on all through. He knew his man.

Well—it is a little unfortunate his being away now. But he can write to him. He sinks back in his chair, giving himself up to the soothing claims of his cigar. But suddenly once again his thoughts spring into active life.

By Jove! he *must* write to him. He had forgotten the chief thing. That Swindon knows of the secret hole in the wall, and that Stamer does not. And that not only Stamer but every soul in the world is ignorant of it except Swindon! Yes—he will write at once—once he gets away from this hideous climate—and Stamer has come back to it.

Let's see. Stamer in those hurried moments had said he would be home in a month, certainly. Well, once he, Mowbray, is in Italy, he will write from there. He moves restlessly. He would have liked to write to-night, to tell him of this secret place in the wall that for centuries has been held sacred in the family. But Stamer's address is unknown to him. However, there is plenty of time; and at the end of the month. Stamer will surely be home by then.

His thoughts break and go off to Victor. An ideal heir! And of his own blood, too. A tall young man, and handsome. And with such a kind heart, bound to be an ideal landlord. Yes, the old place will be safe in his hands. His doubts fade away. He feels quite sure—for the moment. He wakes from his dreaming with a start.

"That you, Victor?"

"Yes. And only one lamp?"

"Don't call for any more just yet; I like the twilight. It is soothing. Sit here; I want to talk to you. What is it you want to be?"

"Engineer," replies Victor, promptly.

"Engineer, eh? Well, do you know what you are going to be?"

" No, sir."

" My heir!"

"Your heir?" Victor grows suddenly very white.

"I have said it," says Mowbray, in his dictatorial manner. "And as my heir you will stay at home and look after the property."

Victor makes a movement. To be ordered thus even by one's own! The young head is flung up, the brows are brought together. There is extreme hauteur in the whole pose.

Mowbray likes it.

"Nay, lad," says he, "don't take it like that. I'm an old man now, and I have seen many of the ways of life. And my own ways have not been to my soul's salvation. But of all things that weigh upon me now, as I stand looking death in the face, it is this one, that I have not done my duty to the people who belong to me. An absentee landlord I have been from first to last. In part I couldn't help it; but whether the landlord can help it or not, it's dam—ahem—terribly bad for the tenants. And I've made up my mind that the one who comes after me shall have their interests in view."

"But—" Victor breaks in, as if bewildered.
"Paul—Paul Swindon——"

"Your faith in Paul Swindon must be greater than mine if you think he would look after them your faith or your ignorance! Enough of him. No, I'll have no spendthrift—"

He drops back in his chair as if overcome; but presently rouses again:

"That's all over," says he, feebly; "but swear, boy, swear that you will be just and fair in all your dealings with all these poor devils under you."

His language is not, perhaps, as special as it might have been, but there is kindly meaning under it that Victor catches and understands.

"I swear," says he.

When he is gone Mowbray leans back in his chair. Yes, he is charming, charming. He must certainly write to Stamer at the end of the month.

CHAPTER XIII.

"What makes this world to be so variable." But lust that folk have in dissension."

CHAUCER.

"My dear John! If my beliefs clash with your desires, I really can't help it!" says Mrs. Egerton. "I am absolutely certain that Cedric Brande is in love with Vincent. He is rather visionary, I allow—a somewhat impossible person in many ways, but a thoroughly good young man, and—an elder son. I have noticed his manner towards her, and in a thousand ways it has come home to me that he is perfectly devoted to her. Yes, devoted is the word! I, indeed, have also thought that—"

She checks herself abruptly; the half-formed, very unsatisfactory, and almost cruel fancy, that Tom Brande also is in love with the blind girl, is one she cannot bear to dwell upon.

"Stuff and nonsense!" says the Squire, gruffly, looking up from his bed of pansies on which he has been bestowing weeks of care—pansies are his hobby. "Your mind is *running* on marriage, it seems to me!"

He had not meant it, but all at once Mrs. Egerton's handsome face grows rosy red. A thought of big William Eyre, and what he had hinted at last evening as she walked back with him from the Feveril's, rushes through her mind.

"Everything is nonsense with you, it seems!"

"And I have often thought, Henrietta," says the Squire, uplifting himself, trowel in hand, and regarding her with a fell eye, "that there was a strain of madness in you. Now, I believe you are raging."

"You can think as you like about me," says Mrs. Egerton, very justly offended; "I assure you I don't care a jot about your opinion one way or the other. But I must *insist* upon your considering your daughter's happiness."

"It's impossible—impossible, I tell you," roars the Squire, enraged by her air and her words alike. "Vincent to marry! Oh! be sensible if you can, my good girl!" Armed with his agricultural weapon, he prances up and down the garden path, declaiming loudly: "Marriage! To dream of marriage for Vincent! Married!—A wife!—Vincent!"

"Well, and why not?" demands Mrs. Egerton, with severity; "I may be a raging lunatic, as you so politely suggest, but she has all her senses round her; and why should she not taste the joys of life as well as another. If God has refused her sight, he has not, at all events, refused her the chance of loving and being loved!" Here the Squire stops his angry walk, and taking courage, she goes up to him and lays her hand upon his arm. "Look here, John! Just think of it! Is she, who has been, because of her blindness, denied so much that makes life sweet, for that very reason to be denied all the rest—the best?"

"But she—— My poor, poor girl!" The words seem to break from the Squire's heart. He stands silent, thinking. His eyes are on the ground, but his mouth is sad, and his whole air dejected. "A wife!—A blind wife!—Who would desire her?"

"Many," says Mrs. Egerton, stoutly. "If this young man wishes to marry her, John, and she is willing to marry him——" Once again she hesitates; little actions, little expressions of Vincent's

coming back to her, actions and expressions that had nothing to do with Cedric! So strange they are'; so hard to place, that she never can be really sure. What a terrible pity it is that the two brothers speak so much alike. Their voices are twins, indeed!

And—*does* Vincent want to marry Cedric? Ch! yes—she does—she must. Mrs. Egerton calls to mind a scene or two where Vincent has gone eagerly forward to meet Cedric. *IVas* it Cedric she thought she was going to meet?

It must have been. It must. She—it was only her stupid imagination—that——

"I really think she likes him," she goes on; "and if so, surely you—surely no one ought to interfere—to place obstacles in the way of her happiness."

The Squire flings the trowel into the pansy bed. "I had never thought of such a thing for her."

"My dear John, do any of us ever think of anything for anyone else? Even for one's nearest and dearest?"

Mrs. Egerton, as she says this, loses herself a little, and goes back to those doubts of a moment ago.

Vincent! Is she in love with Cedric? His voice—his voice she seems indeed to love—but Cedric's voice and Tom's are so fatally alike.

She stops the flow of this thought with almost angry force; and *still* angry, asks herself a last question. If the girl could see, which of these two voices would she choose?

"If I thought," says the Squire, in a queer, jerky way, as if ashamed of himself for giving in, "that it would be for her good to encourage this young man—I—why I——"

Mrs. Egerton breaks into his speech vehemently. "There must be something more in life for a beautiful girl deprived of sight than a mere existence. Who wants to live, only to walk and eat? Not Vincent! She is hardly one to be satisfied with a colourless life."

"Colourless? I don't know what you mean," says the Squire, hotly. "She seems very happy here with—with us."

"So far. But the child grows to the woman," says Mrs. Egerton. "And I don't think you understand Vincent. She is a girl, who, if sight had been left to her by Heaven, would have been one of the lightest-hearted things on earth in her

own sweet, innocent way. And—" she hesitates—then compels herself to speak again. "John! I have sometimes thought of late that—that—she may not be hopelessly blind after all. There is Landor," naming a specialist about sight; "he

"What do you mean?" asks the Squire, frowning.

"What I say," persists she, with determination.
"I cannot help thinking that a girl who at five years old lost her sight through scarlatina need not be hopelessly blind."

"A kind fancy, Henrietta, but without foundation," says the Squire, sadly. "Give it up. To raise hopes only to destroy them is the worst of all brutalities. Let us change the subject."

"As you will," says she, a little disheartened. She had long ago decided on doing the best she could for the girls, and now to be thrown back is bitter to her. Poor dear Bertha's girls. If their father will do nothing for them, why, she must! Her duty to her dead sister seems quite clear. And if he will not listen to Vincent's claims there is still another daughter Madge—

"By-the-bye, I met William Eyre yesterday," says the Squire, suddenly. "He seems to come here a good deal of late. Eh? But after all I don't mind him. He's a sensible fellow—in his own line."

Mrs. Egerton gives him a little glance and shrugs her shapely shoulders.

"So sensible! Are you sure? When you think he is a little 'epris with your Madge!"

"Tut, I made a mistake there."

"You acknowledge you can make a mistake, then? Come, John! you are growing really too magnanimous. We shan't be able to live up to you soon."

"What I say is, that he is far too sensible a fellow to think of marrying at his age!"

"His age! One would think he was a Methuselah."

"He's a widower," says the Squire, with a resounding sigh—his thoughts have gone back to his "sweetheart"—" and that is worse!"

"Oh, no! And as to his not marrying again, I don't know about that," says she, demurely. "However, as we are on the subject of marriage, and as you say my mind is never off it, give me your ear for a moment! There is a word or two I

would say to you about Madge. You know I gave you a little hint some time ago about her and that dear Victor Mowbray?"

She pauses. With the true instinct of affection she has discovered that Madge is in love with Victor; and he with her. And to forward the cause—— A difficult matter with the Squire as arbiter of their fortunes.

"When Lord Mowbray was here, three weeks ago—or four was it?—he surely said a word to you about his nephew's attachment to Madge."

"A word is not an income," says the Squire, with a slight growl, "And as for Mowbray, he barely muttered something about making Victor his heir. Nothing definite."

"Pshaw, John; what a pessimist you are. Always expecting the wrath to come. Of course, he will make that charming boy his heir. Anyone would. And, no doubt—indeed, I have heard, that he is very dissatisfied with Paul Swindon and his little ways! At all events it would be a pity to spoil Madge's chance of being "—she leans forward, and lays artful emphasis on her next words—" Lady Mowbray!"

"Cows far off have long horns!" quotes the Squire, testily; but she can see that he is giving in—to a certain extent.

"You would advise, then, that the young people should meet?"

"Eh? What young people?" asks the Squire.

"Really, John, you seem to have no mind for anything but our pansies," says she, with much affected wrath. "Why Madge and Victor, of course—only now and then, however, bien entendu."

The Squire's mercenary mind is now bent in twain. His detestation of flirting (philandering he calls it) is fighting hard with his fear of spoiling a good marriage for one of his daughters. Victor Mowbray, if his uncle does make him his heir, is all that any man could desire—but, if not his uncle's heir, a mere detrimental.

"She can see him," says he, at last, very grumpily; "but, as you say, only now and then. No engagement, mind. Barely as friends, Henrietta. You understand?"

"I understand," says Mrs. Egerton, who is capable of large margins.

"I shall be leaving here, as you know, to-morrow, and probably shan't be home for a week or so. I must ask you, in my absence, to be as careful of the girls, and of those they meet, as I should be were I at home. I leave them," starchily, and with open distrust, "in your care."

"I wonder you don't leave me the pansies, too," says she, her colour rising as well as her temper. "But I suppose *they* are too precious for such careless supervision as mine."

"Beyond a doubt," returns the Squire, calmly.

"The very question betrays your ignorance of them. No—Daly shall look after them. As for Vincent—" He stops, as if thinking out something. Madge's affair has evidently dropped out of his mind, and only Vincent's happiness dwells with him. She—since the death of the young wife, whom she so strongly resembles—has been the first thought of his life. And now—

"If you honestly think it will be for her happiness, you can let her see this young Brande," says he.

He moves away abruptly. In his soul he does not believe that Brande will care to marry his poor, afflicted, pretty girl, but the very thought of her going—of her leaving him, makes his queer, rugged, worldly, old heart wretched.

Mrs. Egerton knows that, as he turns from her, his eyes are full of tears.

"I leave her to you," says he, in a stifled tone, as he marches off.

CHAPTER XIV.

" I laved my hands
By the water-side,
With willow leaves
My hands I dried."

"Thou hast heart's delight,
I have sad heart's sorrow."

"You may remember, Tom." says Cedric Brande, breaking into a somewhat prolonged silence, "that I often entertained the idea of taking holy orders."

Tom nods his head. Then, watching the pale soft smoke from his cigar rising through the lamplight to the ceiling—they are sitting in the library of "The Elms" after dinner—goes on carelessly: "If your mind is set on that line of business, it's not too late yet to gratify your pious fancy. Go in and win." It is the day after the Squire's departure.

" Not too late, of course, but---"

"You doubt your own worthiness," says Tom, with a shrug and a light laugh. "Just like you."

"It is hardly," begins Ccdric, nervously, "that—"
He stops, and then—eagerly, "though you are right in what you say. I have doubted my own worth—I have never been proved——"

"Oh! as to that," says his brother, with a touch of kindly impatience, "if you aren't saintly enough—the church to-day must be in a poor way. I should take heart of grace if I were you, and——"

"No, I have given up the thought of the church, now. I feel—I believe, there is other work for me to do."

"You mean?" carelessly.

"I—you know Vincent Grace?" He hesitates, his voice now is shy, nervous, and on his young, pale, spiritual face a faint colour is rising.

"Well—I needn't answer that question," says Tom Brande, with affected gaiety. He compels his lips to a smile—that he feels is forced, but all at once he knows that his face has grown livid. An icy hand seems to be clutching at his heart. What is he going to say?

"You know, too," says Cedric gently, tenderly, as if thinking of some beloved and wounded thing, "how afflicted she is, how sad, how lonely her life must be. Well, I—I love her. She is very, very dear to me. And I think she likes me, and——I—hope to——"

"Go on!" says Tom, hoarsely.

"To marry her!"

There is a dead silence.

A very raging devil seems to be now tugging at Tom's heart. He! what does he know of love! "She is very, very dear to me!" What a word for a lover! "How afflicted she is!" How dare anyone think her afflicted! She—the sweetest—Oh! if only he had believed it possible that she might love him, he—— And it is not yet too late! If she is for any man, why not for him—the man who adores her—who understands her—whom she (some instinct not to be over-ridden tells him this) could understand. Nay, does understand. But to cut out his own brother! No; that is impossible. There is still a way out of it, however. She may refuse him!

"You think it an unwise step for me to take," says Cedric, gently, mistaking the meaning of his brother's silence. He speaks in all loyalty and purity of intention, but his words jar on the other's

tortured feelings. An "unwise step" for him? Unwise! To the man who would only too gladly have taken that step, and thought it the greatest wisdom of his life, they produce a maddening sense of irritation.

He crushes back, however, the wild retort that is almost on his lips. A glance at his brother—at the beautiful emaciated face—stifles it.

"You have quite made up your mind?" asks he, presently. He feels his tone is hard, unnatural, "You have counted the cost?"

"Her misfortune, you mean? That," says Cedric, a tender smile overspreading his face, "only makes me love her the more. That is why I love her, I think."

"A nineteenth-century apostle." Tom bursts into strange and excessive laughter. "And she—is she willing to be wedded on those terms?"

"Terms?"

"Well, pity you spoke of, or hinted at it. She will accept you? Marry you? Are you sure of that?"

"I think so. I trust so," says Cedric, reverently, hopefully, calmly—so wonderfully calmly.

The man watching him stirs in his seat.

"I have even thought," says Cedric, dreamily, tenderly, "that in this matter of Vincent if I had gone into the church I could not have done more—devoted myself more——" He pauses.

"Than to her. Well, I hope you will be devoted. However, it is not orders you are going to take now," says his brother, interrupting, with a harsh attempt at mirth, "it is a wife. About as much of an order as most men are equal to. And rour wife—so beautiful—so helpless——"

He-jumps up and goes to a distant table, presumably to get another cigar. It takes him a long time to choose it.

"You will have to look after her; to consult her wishes only; to live for her," says he, in a muffled sort of way, without turning round. "Her happiness must be your one thought."

"I know that," says Cedric, kindling into warm gladness. "That is what attracts me—her utter heiplessness. From the very first that appealed to me."

Tom stares at him.

"And her beauty?" questions he, slowly.

"Oh, that, of course. Still," dreamily, "it was not her beauty that drew me to her. Not that alone; and I am glad of it. To love merely because of form or feature, with no thought for the beauty of the soul——"

"The man who stops to generalise is seldom honestly in love," says Tom, abruptly, coming back to his chair.

"You think I generalise. You do not understand. Love——" he pauses and casts a troubled glance at his brother. "What do you call love?"

"It is a passion!" says Tom, with a sudden rush of vehemence that startles himself.

"Oh! no!" Cedric recoils from him. His beautiful face grows mystical—saddened. "Love, as I see it, is the very heart of all religion. Pure. Perfect. Calm."

Tom Brande rises like a volcano, and flings his cigar into the grate.

"Oh, go to---"

In a second—it only wants a glance at Cedric's face—his mad mood dies away.

"I beg your pardon," says he, with a strange laugh. "To send a man to Jericho is hardly civil." (It had not been Jericho in the first edition, but he had been quick with his revising.) "But you take such odd views of things, and—"

Cedric hardly heeds him; his mind is still on the "idea" that is now the strongest chord of his life's music.

"You can see how it is with me. Her sweetness, her inability to cope with the world round her. You know, Tom," leaning forward with gentle confidence, "how I have always longed to succour the poor—the wretched."

"Oh! come!" frowning, "The poor! The wretched! if you will. But surely Vin—she does not come under that head?"

"Surely she *does*," says Cedric, with a nearer attempt at vehemence than he has yet shown. "What can be more deserving of care—of pity—than——"

"Than the deserving poor!" puts in Tom, sarcastically, some small devil again taking possession of him in this moment of his wrath and misery.

"I was going to say," says Cedric, with a touch of sadness, "when you interrupted me, than one deprived of sight."

"Were you? I must congratulate you, Cedric, on taking your love affair in such a splendidly philanthropic spirit. I admire you. I do really. I couldn't do it. I hope she will admire you, too. But that goes beyond question. Care—pity! She

must appreciate those sentiments. Any woman would. Women are so fond of being pitied, don't you think?"

He breaks off short in his bitter, stupid irony, seeing Cedric's eyes fixed on him as if a little uncertain—a little mournful.

"You think-" begins the latter.

"I don't,—I don't, indeed. I make quite a point of never thinking," says Tom, whose brain seems on fire. "One couldn't create a greater mistake than to do that."

"Still, you seem to think --- " Cedric persists.

"Oh, if you will compel me," shrugging his shoulders. "It seems to me,—the very lightest thought on my part, and hardly, perhaps, worth your consideration—but it does seem to me that you rather mistake the situation. Care and pity! Is she not surrounded with these estimable things already? What the wife you have chosen will want—will be love!"

"That, as I have told you, she has," says Cedric, a gentle blush colouring his pale face. "With all my heart I love her. Who could fail to love so gentle, so dependent a creature?"

Tom Brande makes a sharp movement. "Dependent." The same note always! Is the fellow a fool or mad? Good Heavens, can't he see the beauty of her, as well as that black cloud that God in His strange ways has cast around her.

"It seems to me," Cedric is going on in his quiet voice, "that were she to remain unmarried until her father dies, and her sisters settle themselves in life, that she, poor child, would then be left terribly alone with no one to look after her."

Tom draws a deep breath. His mind turns to the thought that there is, at all events, one person who would give his whole life, from now to the hour of his death, to look after her. He struggles with himself, and succeeds in saying, calmly—

"I can't see that."

"My dear Tom, you must see it."

"I don't, however."

" But!"

"I see this," says Tom, sharply. "What you can't see, evidently. That as you have" (condescended is on the tip of his tongue, but he has the grace to suppress it)—"as you have had the good taste to fall in love with her, other men might do so, too,"

There is a slight silence.

"I am afraid not. That is hardly likely," says Cedric, with a slight contraction of the lips, as if disliking the idea. "Poor darling girl—she——"

"She is one of the loveliest girls on earth," says Tom, controlling himself with the greatest difficulty. "And—yeu may not be a slave to beauty, but other men——"

"I had not thought of that." Cedric's spiritual face looks pained, and, all at once, Tom is sorry he had said those last words. The strange joy that Cedric had felt in the thought that he alone was to be the one to step forward and take this stricken girl out of her life's solitariness into his house and heart, has been shaken. Tom, watching him, sees this, and wonders. To Tom, to love was to be jealous-to believe all eyes that fell on his beloved were caught and held by her, but Cedric- It seems plain to Tom that Cedric had believed himself bent upon one of his missions—a greater, a sweeter, a more exalted one, no doubt, than all the others, but still a mission-when he fell in love with this beautiful blind girl, and had come, as it were, to her rescue; he had regarded her as a being afflicted of God, as cast on one side by Him-bereftlonely. His strange spiritual aspirations had first drawn him to her, and then her beauty had appealed. Even his ascetic nature had not been proof against the charms that had drawn his brother at once into the gulf; it had strengthened him in his resolve to devote his life to her.

The love, no doubt, was genuine, but it was largely mixed with the desire to help the helpless that had been born with him. All his energies, all his money, ever since he had grown to man's estate, had been given to the setting-up of the unhappy ones of the earth—to the lifting of them from their sloughs of despond. And now—at the very touchpoint of his life, his love, fresh-born, has been tinctured with this desire—has, indeed, grown out of it.

Tom—watching, thinking, is conscious of the greatness, the sweetness of his motives; but in his heart he scorns him.

Pity! To pity her!

Pity truly is *akin* to love, as the great Master has it, but it is not love itself; and to marry her through pity, when he—Tom—would gladly have fallen on his knees before her, and *thanked* her for taking

him, unworthy though he is.—It seems an outrage.

"She is lovely," says Cedric. "I know that." His tone is still a little sad; a little depressed. "But—"

"A blind wife is not to be desired."

"I was not going to say that. How could I? Only that any infirmity her body knows is amply supplied by the perfection of her soul. She seems to me one born to comfort others. I told you just now I once had thought of taking holy orders, but not for work here. I had—" he gets up suddenly, and goes to the still undarkened window and gazes out into the moonlit scene before him, as though looking into worlds unknown, unconquered by the Church—" I had thought of going as a missionary." says he.

"A missionary?"

"Yes. To-to-" He hesitates.

"My dear boy, why go on if it distresses you? We all know it. The nigger carries the day. He is always fashionable. A black man, if he is genuinely done—if it is Nature's nixey that has been applied to him, is one of the most interesting things alive at this moment. Do you," with a somewhat satirical glance, "propose to take your wife on a honeymoon to Timbuctoo?"

"I had thought of China," says Cedric, slowly, yet eagerly. He has disregarded, perhaps not heard, his brother's eareless sareasm. It had been very careless. Tom had not believed for a moment in his own suggestion — but now he is wideawake.

" China ?"

"Yes—China," says Cedric, absently. "The difficulties there are immense; the dangers great. A splendid place to tackle! And Vincent, from what I have known of her, would, I think, be willing to risk in something of that. And her gentle beauty—"Tom crashes back his chair, and rises to his feet. "Her gracious air," goes on Cedric, his hands clasped, his eyes alight with a fire born of no earthly passion—"might no doubt be useful—might draw them to the fold—her very affliction."

Tom Brande loses himself altogether. He flings the chair he is leaning on with a mad rage to the ground, where it comes to a resounding end.

"Are you a devil, or only a fool?" cries he. "To take her—her into such dangers as you describe. Is that how you love her? You

would sacrifice her to your cause, as you call it. Her—that slender, beautiful——"

He stops dead short—shocked, horrified at his own emotion. What does it all mean? Too well he knows what it means!

"You take things strangely sometimes, Tom," says his brother, a little coldly, perhaps, but very gently. "When I spoke of dangers, they were not for her. She should know no dangers. I might myself have to risk things, but I should ensure her safety, believe me, quite "—with a little touch of hauteur that sits most strangely on him—"quite as certainly as you—or her father could. And besides, if she does not wish to go, it is a question in the air so far—there is an end of it. All this shall be just as my poor girl wishes. My life is hers, devoted to her from the hour of our marriage."

The words, "my poor girl!" grate again on Tom's mind. He shudders. He feels now as near to hating his brother as ever Cain was.

"She is hardly so 'poor' as you seem to imagine," says he, in a low but harsh tone.

"Unhappy, perhaps I should have said. However, when one is blind, Tom, one is 'poor, indeed.'"

"Not Vincent! And, anyway, why should she be blind? I have gone into it. I have asked questions. Mrs. Egerton tells me it was a fever or something that deprived her of her sight, when she was only five years of age. That strikes me as leaving a margin—something to go on. You take me?"

"No," says Cedric slowly—even reluctantly.

"I mean then that there is some reason for hoping that her eyes are not irretrievably closed."

"You think wrong," says Cedric, with a quick burst of something that is not so much anger as agitation. "She—a girl who for fifteen years or so has been dead to the world's light—to be now restored to it. No, no! Impossible!"

There is such strange passion in his manner that Tom is silenced for a moment. "Cedric the calm," as he often calls him in his thoughts, to be thus vehement. And why, because he, Tom, would desire the return of sight to the girl his brother loves.

"But why?" asks he at last.

"Because it would be against the workings of

God," says Cedric, pale-trembling. "Would you fight with the laws above you?"

"I would have her regain her sight if that might be," says Toni.

"But it cannot be. I tell you it is impossible," says Cedric, in a trembling tone. His excitement is uncontrollable, gentle as it is. "It is a visitation of God. Who shall attempt to conquer it?"

Tom is silent. Once again, the true meaning of his brother's love for Vincent comes to him. She is dependent on him now. If she were to regain her sight (a contingent only too sadly remote) she would be beyond the pale of his sympathy-his help. To have her to himself alonesad, afflicted; to know that he is her sole guardian, her protector against all evils-in this lies the love of Cedric.

"I should," says Tom, at last, "if I were you." Cedric says nothing more. He lapses into silence, and, leaning back in his chair, gives himself up to thought.

After a while. "If you were me, you would not. And yet, if you think of it, we are strangely alike in one way. She says our voices are impossible to distinguish one from the other. And a stranger thing," he laughs softly, and leans towards his brother. "She told me only yesterday it was my voice, not me she liked. She didn't know me, but she did know my voice. Such a quaint odd fancy, wasn't it?" He waits for his brother's reply, but Tom has turned aside on some pretext, and Cedric cannot see how white his face has grown.

His voice—not him! Then who does she really love?

"I have thought-I have indeed made up my mind," says Cedric, his voice breaking through his brother's terrible reverie. "Of-of asking her to-morrow to---" He stops, nervously.

"Asking her---?" Tom turns and looks at

"To marry me!"

(To be continued.)



H! rose of tender pink, Washed by the morning dew, Which hath the lovelier blush, My love or you?

Oh! bird upon the bough, Singing so sweet and clear, Which hath the lovelier voice, You or my dear?

I gaze into the rose, Above the bird sings clear; Along the garden path Her step I hear.

She blushes as she comes, She sings a happy lay: The rose hangs down her head, The bird has flown away.

DAISY ARGELS.



OCCUPATIONS FOR GENTLEWOMEN.

H.-PAINTING.

By Louise Jopling.



HERE is no reason whatever why women, as well as men, should not gain their livelihood as painters. There is, in reality, no

on the score of sex.

The training

requires no Herculean effort, nothing that the male only, and not the female can do; no especial tax on the powers of endurance.

What is really wanted is a certain force of character that enables the possessor to overcome all obstacles: and, to the woman-painter, there are many.

To begin with, parents do not look upon an occupation for their daughters in the same serious manner as they do in the case of their sons.

In the apprenticeship stage the girl of a household has many minor difficulties to contend with; for instance, breakfast is never specially prepared for her, and punctually sent up as it would be for "the young master" of the house.

No servant can ever be taught to believe that a girl's "messing about" with paints and brushes is anything more than a kind of fashionable craze.

Then the mothers themselves are often very trying to the budding genius.

"Angelica, the dressmaker is coming to-day, and you must have your bodice tried on." Or, "You must call with me on Mrs. So-and-so." And poor Angelica cannot set the maternal injunction aside with a cheery "Oh, bother!" as her more fortunate brother would do, if called upon to waste his time in this or any other similar manner. When parents allow their girls to learn a profession they have an idea that, because the students are girls, they can acquire their training at a much cheaper rate.

Of course, there are many exceptions to this general rule, and the father of Rosa Bonheur, amongst many more, is a striking example.

If a girl is destined to become an artist let her be taken quite seriously: she should be despatched to the studio as expeditiously as her brother is in going to the City, and no so-called duties should be imposed upon her, such as visits in the afternoon, home dress-making, or any of the many ills that female flesh is heir to.

She should be encouraged to read the best literature, as, the more her mind is stored with beautiful creations, the better her artistic work will be.

An artist cannot be too highly cultivated.

Of course, a thorough training costs time, but so does an apprenticeship to any trade.

After a student has spent six or seven years in preparation, there is a wide field open to her in portraiture and black-and-white work. In the absence of any State patronage of Fine Arts, it is always a chance whether a livelihood can be obtained from the making of pictures. It must always be a matter for the individual only, whether the painter has the gift of pleasing the public, and so finding a market for her wares. If fortunate enough to possess what is called "a gift" for portraiture, the demand will always be equal to the supply; husbands, wives, and children will always be wanting each other's portraits taken. Much can be done in this line by those who like to paint animals, for there are many people who by far prefer their dogs to their relations.

The illustrating of newspapers is ever and always on the increase, and a rapid sketcher can make a great deal of money in this way.

In what is technically called "design," there is much also that women can do. The great manufacturers of wall-papers, carpets, cretonnes, and figured goods of all kinds, are always ready to purchase artistic and original compositions of form and colour.

The "Arts and Crafts" Exhibitions have done good service in bringing designers and buyers in touch with each other. House decoration, for which an artistic education is essential, opens out a large vista for the benefit of the unemployed.

A lady is much more competent to give advice to the would-be furnisher than the upholsterer's "young man," who scarcely knows what the word "home" means.

Many ladies are employed at Messrs. Doulton's, and other large potteries, in decorating china, and necessarily here a good artistic education is most essential.

The painting of fans is one that allows full scope for artistic taste, and in Paris many well-known artists have made it a speciality.

These are a few of the many outlets for women's energies, and, had I more time and space I could enumerate many more.

Why more women have not taken advantage of them is because up to a very little time ago, their Art education has never been considered from a practical point of view, and, in consequence, the opportunities of acquiring it have been few and far between.

Mrs. Grundy still holds sway, and many directors of schools honestly think that a woman will receive harm, where a man will not, in studying the human figure. How this conclusion is arrived at is a dead secret between themselves and the respected lady in question.

No artist can hope to draw human beings well,

without an intimate knowledge of how they are made.

The eccentricities of fashionable attire will never teach them; for clothes, like speech, as Talleyrand defined it, are often made to hide form, and not to betray it.

A student, whether of painting or design, must make anatomy one of his chief subjects; and this can only be studied from the living form.

In different actions the muscles are always changing, and no amount of printed charts will teach this.

A few years ago Paris was inundated with English and American women, who could only there obtain and continue their Art education without shocking the sensibilities of their prudish friends at home.

Perhaps because it was abroad, the friends thought it was all right, as people usually lay that flattering unction to their souls when listening to a rather risqué French play.

Art education, however, for women is becoming better understood, and few mothers shock us now by attributing indecency to an earnest study of the human form divine as the Creator made it.

There is more indelicacy in over-modesty than many people are aware of. To the pure in mind, all things are pure.

I think when a member of a family elects to adapt Art as a profession, it is seldom seriously considered. If it be a boy, he is thought to be lazy, and few parents will be tempted to support a sonforthe many years necessary to learn his craft, when, perhaps, quite within his reach is the certainty of a safe and comfortable trade.

In the girl's case, particularly if she be pretty, what more natural than that the parents should speculate upon her speedy marriage? And in this way valuable time is lost, habits of idleness are fostered, and the time comes when, perhaps, the unfortunate daughter is in want of a livelihood, and it is too late. I hear so often of these cases, and meet many sad instances of them. The hardworking parents are occupied with to-day, and never cast a thought upon to-morrow—a morrow that dawns only when their own work is done, and finds their children totally unprepared for the struggle of life.

A little forethought and this could be prevented. Let every mother's son—and mother's daughter—learn a profession, and let them learn it in the days when they have no cares and anxieties to distract their whole attention from their work.

It would be far better for those women who wish to marry if they could make up their minds to thoroughly master a profession before doing so.

Their husbands then would treat them as comrades, and not as part of their goods and chattels, and, perhaps, in time would think their work as important as a well-considered menu.

On account of this half-education in Art, women are apt to be despondent about themselves, and think, with too much facility, that women never can do anything. Perhaps I am not a good judge of the insuperable difficulties there seem to be in the way of a girl finishing her Art education after she accepts a proposal of marriage, as I only commenced my artistic education after I had been a wife some four or five years.

Now when I hear of an art student being engaged, I wonder what it is that prevents her coming to the studio and going on with her art work all the more seriously just because she has had the happiness to win a man's love. This precious truth alone ought to make her more doubly in earnest in all that she has undertaken, and should help to bring out the best that is in her. But instead, visits, congratulations, dresses, and all the confabulations that ensue thereon; so that when Love comes in at the door, poor Art goes out of the window.

It ought to be as much a shame for a woman not to be a bread-winner, as it is for a man, and if this perfect equality existed, many marriages would turn out happier.

I know there is the question of the more uncertain health of the married woman, but this has never debarred the real working woman—"the washerwoman" and "the charwoman"—from keeping themselves and their families, and more often than not their husbands as well, on the work of their own hands. Such women's homes are no whit less comfortable than that of the idle woman, who stays at home and devotes her spare time to gossip and slander.

It is generally considered that the artist, like the

poet, must be born, not made. This only applies to the artist as a poet—a creator.

Any one can become a painter and a draughtsman by means of great application and hard work. The people who tell you that they can't draw a straight line, talk nonsense, because with the aid of a ruler they will find it is very easy. It is because they won't take the trouble to learn that they talk in this way. Whoever hoped to play a sonata by Mozart or Beethoven without for many days or months practising their scales and exercises beforehand? It is the same with drawing; you must practise many times before you draw correctly.

The Japanese understand this, and all the children learn to draw. No parent waits to see whether, unaided, the child develops a special gift. Each child receives the same tuition, and the result is an artistic nation. Here and there, the born artist, the creator, soars aloft and leaves his companions far behind. His wings are not crippled by the general training; on the contrary, his public is more appreciative, on account of its better education.

Women, if they have been properly taught themselves, make good teachers. They have plenty of patience, and, strange as it may sound in some ears, have a large amount of sympathy to expend upon the bungling efforts of beginners.

It is a responsible position to advise anybody to take up Art as a livelihood, as so much depends upon the individual, as I have before pointed out. If she have courage, and the real love of work for work's sake, she will be bound to succeed in anything she undertakes; but if she be lazy, and takes refuge in the common excuse of the idle, that "a mood" must be waited for in which she can work, she will never succeed, and she will only fill up the ranks of the useless cumberers of the earth, who cry out that it is a shame that they starve, whilst others (the workers) are filled with plenty.

"A mood," even an artistic one, is very like a muscle. If not used, it is bound to wither away. There is plenty of work to be done in the field of Art, but it is only by patient tilling of the ground that one can hope to reap the full harvest of success.



ON THE YARE, NEAR NORTON CONYERS. ALLEGED ORIGINAL OF THORNFIELD.

AUTHORS' COUNTIES.

IV.—YORKSHIRE: CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

By Alexander H. Japp.

TORKSHIRE is a big word. It covers a wide area. Not only so; it is very varied alike in respect to general aspect, strata, and product. Here in one part you have wide valleys with streams running through them, like ribbons of silver, among far-extending green pasturelands, passing into low swelling hills, on which in the distance sheep may be seen dotted, like scattered pearls, when the sun is shining after rain; there, again, you are on wide swelling heaths; hills, bare and wind-swept, where only heather and gorse and bold fir-trees rise defiant of northern winds; with streams rushing down, tumultuous, foamy, where trout ascend, and where the angler finds his joy. There, again, you have vast regions where the earth, black and dreary, belches smoke; where the miner works for hours at a stretch underground, a mile or more away from the shaft at which he descended, finally moving up through passages so narrow that he has to crawl like a wild creature, and then, lying on his side, with pick extracts the coal from the seam above him; not far off you find yourself in a region of furnaces, slag and dust spread round as far as you can see. If you follow the course of some of the Yorkshire rivers from their source, you have a

veritable image of human life. They flow, tiny, clear, and sweet, till by reception of tributaries they swell and widen, and just when they seem to have gained the glory of full existence, factories cover and blacken their sides, and throw upon them the shadows of human effort and endeavour, with a sense of struggle and of battle, as they push their way onward, cloudy and dark.

It is with a limited portion of Yorkshire that we shall now have to do-with the wild, grey, bleak, moorland portion of the West Riding, mainly-and within a comparatively narrow region round it, in which we may, however, find just enough of contrast to the central area, to heighten the sense of its greyness, grimness, silence, and solitude. The Brontës did not wander far afield, in a sense, for anything. They were true children of the moors in this. They found their main wealth near at home. Save when Charlotte takes us to Brussels in "Vilette" and in "The Professor," and reveals to us there the depths of her misery, isolation, and unrest in her exile from Haworth, she is content with the scenes her limited movements had made familiar to her thereabout. The most lasting impressions she has made, the most powerful pictures she

A STORM COMING ON AL PONDENS KIRK, HAWORTH MOOR.

has painted, are all of scenes and places, and persons in this region.

Haworth is, nowadays, hardly the Haworth of their time; 'and indeed the whole district has been robbed of much of its character and remoteness by the railway. There is now a station at Haworth; the old church has been what is called restored, really improved off the face of the earth, and what is really a modern one stands on the site, in which memorials of the Brontes are to be seen; the vicarage—whose main door faces that of the church,

into sympathy with the great source of their enjoyment. Haworth lies on a kind of irregular shelf in a grey slope; behind it sweep away gradually, rising as they sweep, the deep purple moorlands, where as one wanders one cannot help_thinking of the lines, suggested by the summer hum of insects:

"That undefined and mingled hum, Voice of the moorland, never dumb."

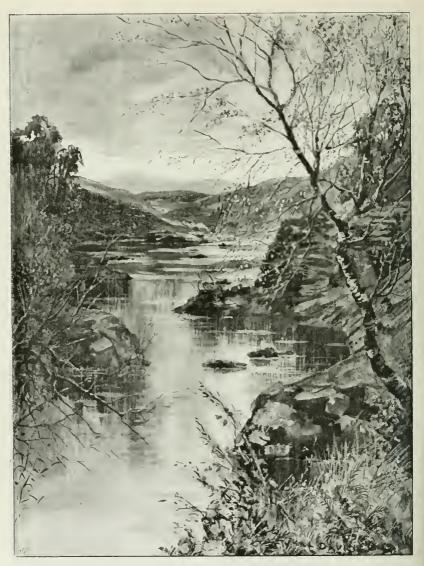
The fascination of these vast expanses, with the becks, sparkling and bickering down them, soon laid hold on these precocious children of genius.



JANE EVRE'S VISIT TO THE GREAT CHESTNUT DURING THE STORM.

the churchyard between—is much changed, both outside and in, from what it was in their day; the road from Keighley (pronounced there Keathly), with the houses far along straggling up the sides of the road, is now less used than it was. Other changes have come in train of the great change that connected Haworth with the main railway lines. Only the solitudes rising above and behind Haworth, that the Bronté children so delighted in, remain intact to gratify the curiosity and imaginative demand of the visitor of to-day; and there you must wander if you would enter fully

How touching it is to read these words from the nurse who came to attend on Mrs. Brontë in her last illness: "The six little creatures used to walk hand in hand towards the glorious wild moors, which in after life they loved so passionately, the elder ones taking thoughtful care for the toddling wee things." As they grew older their ramblings extended; they knew every turn—cliff, hollow, scaur and ridge, burn and beck. Emily, especially, loved the moors, and would, with her dog, wander half-days there. Charlotte says that "flowers brighter than the rose bloomed in the blackest of the heath for



SCENE ON SLADEN BECK, HAWORTH, NEAR THE BRONTE WATERFALL.



her." The sense as of grandeur in the monotonous far-stretching solitudes haunts Charlotte, even when she goes farther afield. She loves nature in its gloomier, or, at least, its more neutral, aspects—grey skies, with sudden lights shooting through them; rain, wind, and storm rising, and dark clouds that even impart a sombreness to the richer plains below—at least, these aspects are what she is most fain to select and to dwell on. This is, perhaps, most marked in "Jane Eyre." One of the most striking instances of it is the description of the storm as "Jane Eyre" seeks shelter under the chestnut tree, at the end of Chapter xxiii. The wintry scene in which she represents "Jane Eyre" as first meeting Rochester when he met with

his accident, might be cited also. A rare beauty to the eyes of all the family, through their keen imaginations and poetic feelings, rose on the lower grey treeless hill-sides divided into fields by the hard, grim stone walls.

LOCKING TOWARDS RUMBALD'S MOOR.

On the higher reaches, when they could venture so far, they could look over to the north-eastward, and see the vast expanse of Rumbald's Moor, or Rumble's Moor, as it is called there; and as they listened to the weird and romantic tales in the old days connected with portions of it, they would find impulses, many and strong, toward the kind of records which at least three of them were successfully to tender to the world.

Away up on the moor, about two miles from Haworth, flows Sladey Beck-a favourite resort of the Brontë's in summer time-here for a little bit drawing its snake-like length of white along comparatively level reaches, then suddenly dashing itself tumultuously through between high rough bouldery walls, with ferns and rare grasses and hill plants rising between the big stones that border the Beck there, sometimes so closely overhanging the leaping waters, indeed, that they are permanently glittering with diamond spray. But though Charlotte had never seen it in winter glory, she often longed to do so, and here we have a record concerning the Brontë "waterfall" from her hand, alas, only too near the close. On November 20th, 1854, we find her thus writing to a friend:-

"I intended to have written a line yesterday, but just as I was sitting down for the purpose, Arthur [her husband] called to me to take a walk. We set off, not intending to go far, but though wild and cloudy, it was fair in the morning. When we had got about half-a-mile on the moors, Arthur suggested the idea of the waterfall; after the melted snow he said that it would be fine. I had often wished to see it in its winter power—so we walked on. It was fine indeed, a perfect torrent racing over the rocks white and beautiful! It began to rain while we were watching it, and we returned home under a streaming sky. However, I enjoyed the valk inexpressibly, and would not have missed the spectacle on any account."

Then, lower down, and almost in the other direction, you can carry the eye to the village of Pondens, which has some associations of a contrasted kind. Mr. Brontë was fond of talking of it, and of telling about the great irruption that took place on the 2nd September, 1824, when an immense body of stones and earth slipped from Crowhill, a height of 1,000 feet above sea-level, between Keighley and Colne, and descended even as far as Pondens and overspread some of the cornfields there. He believed this was the result of an earthquake, and wrote about it to the Leeds Mercury. We can easily conceive him, though not much inclined to walk with his girls, going over with them more than once to Pondens to see the evidences that still remained of the "earthquake," to which he had paid particular heed; and calling their attention on the way not only to geological peculiarities, but telling them stories of the houses that they passed or saw as they went-stories which some of the girls were to brood over and to present to the world, "mixed with brains," in the afterdays.

The change from this region was very great when Charlotte, at the age of ten, was sent to Cowan Bridge School, of which the Rev. W. Carus Wilson was the director, whom she has celebrated in "Jane Eyre" as Mr. Brocklebridge. No doubt, as in some other instances, she associated with traits in Mr. Carus Wilson traits she had observed in others whom later she met; but the portrait is consistent, powerful, and pronounced for all that. Cowan Bridge (Lowood in "Jane Eyre") lies on the Leck as it flows to join the Lune, and is situated on the Leck fells just where they sweep into the plain. It is about twenty miles from Haworth. Charlotte Brontë has pictured it as correctly as she has faithfully outlined the characters of some of the teachers and girls who were there. Ah, she must often have looked

with wistful longing to the lines of hills that rose vaguely when she looked in the direction of her home. Her elder sisters, Maria and Elizabeth, were there and died there, and the fact brought an additional shadow over her spirit during her residence, and no wonder. There was much in such a situation to depress. The low, flat houses-some of them never erected for habitation at all, but for other purposes-that constituted the institution buildings, lay too near the stream, since the elevation had not been studied. They could not be but damp and cold. But despite damp, cold, and misery, Charlotte Brontë was laying up treasures there. The years she spent there were very fruitful. She transmuted the pains and agonies she underwent by the magic of art, into joys and glories.

"I discovered, too," she writes, "that a great pleasure, an enjoyment which the horizon only bounded, lay all outside the high and spike-guarded walls of our garden; this pleasure consisted in prospect of noble summits girdling a great hillhollow, rich in verdure and shadow; in a bright beck, full of dark stones and sparkling eddies. How different had this scene looked when I viewed it laid out beneath the iron sky of winter. stiffened in frost, shrouded with snow; when mists as chill as death wandered to the impulse of east winds along those purple peaks, and rolled down "ing" and holm till they blended with the frozen fog of the beck. That beck itself was then a torrent, turbid and curbless; it tore asunder the wood, and sent a raving sound through the air, often thickened with wild rain or whirling sleet, and through the forest on its banks, that showed only ranks of skeletons.

"April advanced to May; a bright, serene May it was; days of blue sky, placid sunshine, and soft western or southern gales filled up its duration. And now vegetation matured with vigour; Lowood shook loose its tresses; it became all green and flowery; its great elm, ash, and oak skeletons were restored to majestic life. Woodland plants sprang up profusely in its recesses, unnumbered varieties of moss filled its hollows, and it made a strange ground-sunshine out of the wealth of its wild primrose plants. I have seen their pale gold gleam in overshadowed spots like scatterings of the sweetest lustre. All this I enjoyed often and fully."

Brocklebridge Church, in "Jane Eyre," is Tunstall Church, of which Mr. Carus Wilson was the



Cowan Bridge, the road nicely varied and diversified with trees, rising and falling as it goes, and at each turn presenting new views and pictures. In summer it was a journey to be enjoyed, the air fresh and sweet and clear, with larks and other birds rising on every side and singing unceasingly. Charlotte Bronte has exactly described it in " Iane Eyre," but tells with more detail of the winter landscape and experience. Naturally, the memories of pain or torture dwell most in the minds of all of us; and more especially in those of the young.

"During January, February, and part of March, the deep snows, and, after their melting, the almost impassable roads, prevented our stirring beyond the garden walls, except to go to church. . . Sundays were dreary days in that winter season. We had to walk two miles to Brocklebridge Church, where our patron officiated. We set out cold, we arrived at church colder; during the morning service we became almost paralysed. It was too far to return to dinner, and an allowance of cold meat and bread, in the same penurious proportion observed

round be-

tween the services. At the close of the afternoon service we returned by an exposed and hilly road, where the bitter winter wind, blowing over a range of snowy summits to the north, almost flayed the skin from our faces. I can remember Miss Temple walking lightly and rapidly along our drooping line, her plaid cloak, which the frosty winds fluttered, gathered close about her, and encouraging us, by precept and example, to keep up our spirits and march forward, as she said, like stalwart soldiers."

After a period at home, Charlotte went to the school of Miss Wooler, at Roehead, which is about eighteen miles from Haworth, on the road from Leeds to Huddersfield. It was a pleasant change to her, alike on account of the delightful country in that part-a gentle, soft-curving, and heaving landscape-in no sense wild, yet suffi-



BURNING OF "THORNFIELD HALL." VIEW OF TUNSTALL CHURCH.

ciently varied and full of contrasts; the more comfortable style of house-a fine old mansion,

Miss Taylor, too, in much supplemented the elements of attraction she found in Miss Nussey. Charlotte's letters to Miss Taylor have been unfortunately lost; but we learn from a good authority that "they were more philosophic and argumentative than were those to Miss

> Though shy and reserved, with a remarkable power of self-repression, yet she yearned for sympathy, for companionship; in these two

father had his first curacy; and she could not have failed to feel deep interest in visiting the scenes where he had walked and worked when yet a young man. The old mansions around it, too, had their full tale of tradition and story-Oakwell Hall and Howley Hall-to which she listened with keen curiosity, laying them up in her mind and heart. She heard, too, from Miss Wooler and others a great deal about the Luddites and the riots. How when machinery was first introduced into the fac-



Out of this mingled miscellanea of fact and impression her genius by-and-bye drew her second great novel, "Shirley," in which, side by side with the story of the riots in that part, she has presented us with some splendid pictures of scenery and some incomparable portraits. While at Roehead

she spoke of "the dreams that absorb me and the fiery imagination that at times eats me up." Later years witnessed to this truth; all the world round Roehead was contributory to her. She realised it, laid it up secretly in her imagination, and reproduced it with utmost faithfulness when the time came-the scenery, with its dells and glades and gently swelling hills; the scattered houses, the mills and all: and there she enshrined in fairest records her fragrant friendships. Her father was partly represented by Mr. Helstone, though Mr. Robertson, of Heckmondwike, a personal friend of Mr. Brontë's, we are told, supplied a few traits. Mary and Martha Taylor -who are presented to us as Rose and Jessie Yorke-and, indeed, the whole Taylor family, are vividly portrayed. She has painted her sister Emily in the character of Shirley herself, and Ellen Nussey in the person of Caroline Helstone. The life of that part of Yorkshire lives there more completely, perhaps, than in any other available record, and certainly there is none more attractive.

We have no call to follow her to Belgium, nor can we return to Haworth and trace her doings there day by day and week by week during the years when she attended faithfully to household affairs, and stole time to think and write. The world knows and remembers more of the details of that period perhaps than of the earlier one. Through pain and death, and sorrows bred of evils even worse than death, she bravely held on her way till fame found her out on the misty moorland, and crowned her there. Haworth, with its bleak

upland moors, is consecrated to us because Charlotte Brontë 'and her sisters loved to wander there, and have so thrown the spell of their genius over it, that all who read know the picture, and, if they have not beheld it, would fain behold the reality.

"L'ART DE TENIR SALON."

By LADY JEPHSON.

I N this matter-of-fact, phlegmatic England, in this year of grace. 1801. Fart de tenir calan is year of grace, 1894, l'art de tenir salon is well-nigh a forgotten one. The art of entertaining as understood by récherché dinners (whereat the wine is of the best that money can buy), balls (whose marvels of floral decoration are duly recorded in the Society papers), and suppers (from Benoist's & Gunter's), is widely practised. The material aspect of the art flourishes vigorously, but its intellectual and spiritual side is almost extinct. Who among us, nowadays, could make our guests forget the meagre fare placed before them by the charm and grace of our conversation? Yet we all know the story of Madame Scarron's servant whispering to her when the food ran short: " Causez, madame! Causez! Il n'y a pas d'autre plat." We give deep thought to the bodily food to be set before our guests, and none at all to the mental. That conversation is an "art," is a recognised fact. Arts must be cultivated before proficiency comes. The best talkers of all times have given thought and preparation to their conversation. Who has not heard of the prying guest who, peering about before his hostess came in, discovered Madame de Staël's little note-book with her carefully prepared headings for the evening's conversation? Forced, pedantic talk is one thing, but a little reflection given beforehand to subjects likely to come under discussion, is another. Why should we devote our talents solely to the bodily entertainment of our guests, and none at all to the intellectual? Is it not because the material side of our lives is so much more to us than the spiritual?

London grows more vulgar every year, and Plutus sways rule over a larger number of subjects in our capital nowadays than perhaps he ever did. Mrs. Brown gives a ball, and the following day we see chronicled in a society journal that the "flowers alone" cost so many "lundreds of pounds." Mrs. Smith gives a dance; and someone is found to paragraph its success with a neat little rider to the effect that the floral embellishments far outshone Mrs. Brown's. We worship lavishness, display, wealth, and luxury; but refinement, good-breeding,

and brains are at a discount. Those few who attempt to gather about them intellect and attainments, are ridiculed for their "Bohemian tastes" and "want of exclusiveness." Genius, in the shape of poets and painters, is not to be tolerated in smart salons, whereas vulgarity (be it only well gilt) is quite the right associate for dukes and duchesses. Painters are in their proper places in the galleries of the Royal Academy on the annual occasions when all smart London crowds there. As for poets! Well, no one cares particularly either for them or their works, nowadays; but the dear, delightful millionaires are welcome at all times and seasons. We may wish sometimes that their "verbs and nouns did more agree"; but as long as they feed us well, we think grammar, as opposed to the rules of Lindley Murray, quite original and refreshing. The age of sentiment (in company with many other good things) is past. There are no "Lydia Languishes," nowadays; no tender, impressionable " Evelinas," and few chivalrous "Orvilles." "Elizabeth Bennets" and "Fanny Prices" would be thought priggish; and "elegant females," in company with "excellent understandings," have quite gone out of fashion. Modern authors do not heap misfortunes on their heroines as Lady Blessington did on Miss Mordaunt; nor do they make amends eventually by wedding-bells and a coronet. The novels of each age are mirrors of its manners. We cannot lay the flattering unction to our souls that we have improved, if we exchange the tender, gentle, fainting feminine creatures of yesterday for the "Dodos," "Noras," and "Evadnes" of to-day. The "Knightleys" and "Darcys" of a past generation may be priggish, even stilted; but surely they are better than the modern hero. If people talked nowadays as they do in the pages of Evelina and Cccilia, they would be voted bores and pedants. It is open to doubt whether the commonplaces, the trivialities, and "chaff" of this age are in any sense superior to the super-refinement, the stilted phraseology and sensibility of the past one. Few in our undignified times of hurry and scurry, of advertisement and push, have leisure to cultivate the tender graces of life. It is the ambition ot

every fashionable woman in London to be seen at as many smart crushes as she can compass in a night. She has no chance of cultivating the obsolete accomplishment of talking well, since, at most, her interchange of ideas at these functions is limited to the query, "Goin' on to-night?" The art of talk survives with a few old people; that of chatter has taken its place with the young ones. When woman was content with her legitimate and unrivalled sphere as queen in domestic life, and in her salon, she was best and greatest. There lay her true kingdom, and in ruling it she could give exercise to the most brilliant talents. History has shown us what an important part the salon played in the development of literature and art in France. We know that the powerful cardinals, Richelieu and Mazarin, were jealous of the influence wielded by the Marquise de Rambouillet and the Marquise de Sablé in their salons. The same fear and jealousy were shown by Napoleon when he banished Madame de Staël and Madame Récamier from Paris. Men in those days recognised the power charming and intelligent women possessed of influencing and of captivating.

"De toutes les façons vous avez droit de plaire," wrote the Abbé de Montreuil of Madame de Sevigné. Women in their panoply of feminine graces, were "foemen worthy of the steel," even of iron men like Richelieu and Bonaparte. What a triumph when the gentle, sweet graces of womanhood, combined with superior intelligence, were considered formidable enough weapons to be reckoned with. Now that woman has entered into competition with man, and invaded his precincts, she has, as a natural consequence, abdicated her sovereignty. Mrs. Jellaby was neither a success in public nor in private life. Entrenched behind her own earth-works, woman was invulnerable: leading forlorn hopes, followed by a straggling band of adherents, she is pitiable.

Frenchwomen seem to have been peculiarly endowed with the social gifts and charms which fit women for the *rôle* of hostesses. Madame de Rambouillet, Madame de Sablé, Madame Scarron, Mlle. de Scudéry, Madame de Sevigné, Madame de Staël, Madame Récamier, and the gallicised Madame Mohl were all famous in their generation for *l'art de tenir salon*. We do not find that the pleasures of the table entered much into the enjoyments of these receptions. There seems to have

been infinite bonhomie, and a genial give and take of spicy wit, information, anecdote, and quotation. Those who had ideas made a present of them for the common good; there was discussion, argument, raillery, delicate humour, and veiled compliment. Sometimes serious questions occupied the attention of these graceful triflers. There were political salons, as well as those devoted to the arts of conversation and music. Madame Mohl, in her sketch of Madame de Rambouillet, says:-"Of all the distinguished ladies of the seventeenth century, the Marquise de Rambouillet deserves the first place, not only as the earliest in order of time, but because she first set on foot that long series of salons which for two hundred and fifty years have been a real institution, known only to modern civilisation"; and she goes on to explain that the increasing taste for the society of women "might indeed have created salons; but it is to Madame de Rambouillet's individual qualities that we owe the moral stamp given to the Society she founded, which, in spite of all the inferior imitations that appeared long after, remains the precedent which has always been unconsciously followed. . . . Reform is in the course of nature, and one of its laws is a tendency to exaggeration in the opposite extreme from the evil that has been overcome. The excessive coarseness, both in talking and writing, that had been universal, was succeeded by what was thought at the time over-strained refinement. But we should not listen to the accusations of some of her contemporaries on this head, if we could hear and know all that Madame de Rambouillet put an end to. Ideas and expressions current in palaces in 1600 would not now be admitted into the porter's lodge; and if any of us would compare the plays acted in London before the Court of Charles II. with what would be tolerated now, we should get some notion of what the Précieuses, at whose head stood Madame de Rambouillet, effected in France."

The Hôtel Rambouillet stood in the Rue St. Thomas du Louvre, and for thirty years it was the rallying point of all that was choice in wit, beauty, intellect, and birth. Madame de Rambouillet was the first among the noblesse of France to welcome learned Plebeians or low-born men of letters to her salon. Madame Mohl says:—"The most illustrious persons in every line met in her rooms, and each gained by contact with the others. The

nobility improved in real civilisation by acquiring a taste for letters; the manners of the learned became easy and dignified, not only from their intercourse with those who were polished by a court life, but much more from the respect that was paid to them by the presiding spirit out of regard for their own intrinsic value." Walckenaer, in his Life of Sévigné, describes one of the celebrated gatherings at the Hôtel Rambouillet, where a brilliant and distinguished company is assembled to hear Corneille read his latest work. Lovely young women, poets, courtiers, prelates, and grandes dames are gathered together; and we can somewhat picture the company when we know that among them were Madame de Sévigné (then in her youth and beauty), Madame de Sablé, the Princesse de Condé, the Duchesse de Longueville, Madame de la Fayette (then unmarried), and the Duchesse de Chevreuse. Of Madame de Rambouillet's wit and presence of mind, as well as dignity, a good story is told. Cardinal Richelien knew that all ranks of society, as well as shades of political opinion, met in the Hôtel Rambouillet; and he accordingly was consumed with curiosity to know what was said about him there. In order to arrive at this knowledge he sent Boisrobert to the Marquise desiring her to be friendly enough to let him know who spoke against him in her house! Madame de Rambouillet, with the greatest presence of mind, answered that: " Ses amis sachant combien elle était attachée à son Eminence personne n'osait en sa présence parler contre lui."

It is a strong proof of the influence the salon exercised as a refining and elevating agency, that the famous French Academy had its origin in a lady's drawing-room. Among Madame de Rambouillet's guests were Balzac, Racan, Gombault, and Voiture, and they all joined in deploring the want of style in French literature. Madame Mohl says: "They would discuss a word in all its acceptations before it was admitted, and the ladies were constantly consulted. Several words were banished from conversation by the Marquise so completely that I could not venture even to quote them." Cardinal Richelieu eventually became the patron of this Society, and letters patent were issued entitling the Association to call itself the French Academy, "because its express purpose was to preserve and improve the French language."

To Madame de Rambouillet's receptions suc-

ceeded the Saturday evenings of Mlle, de Scudéry, Cousin's account of these sounds very pleasant: "The habitual conversation was easy and airy, tending to pleasantry; the women, like those of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, were correct without prudery or primness; the men were gallant and attentive, and surrounded them with the graceful homage which distinguished the best manners of the time." Authors read aloud their latest contributions to literature, and friendly criticism and discussions followed. Madame de Sablé's salon was, perhaps, less literary and more aristocratic. Certainly a departure was made when the brilliant and intellectual society of Hôtel Rambouillet, as time advanced, developed into the deeply religious gatherings which met in the small house of the garden of Port Royal. Madame de Sablé embraced Jansenism, so did the Duchesse de Longueville, and many others of the friends of Madame de Sable's youth. Mère Angélique Arnauld (the Abbess of Port Royal and victim of the persecutions of the Jesuits) was one of her dearest friends, whilst Pascal (the profound thinker), Madame de la Fayette, Pierre Nicole (the author of Essaies Morales), and Antoine Arnauld (who wrote De la Perpetuité de la Foi, Traité des vraies et des fausses Idées, &c.), were among the pious and learned people who formed the society of Madame de Sablé's old age. Madame de Maintenon, writing to one of the nuns of St. Cyr, describes how, in the days of her indigent widowhood, society followed her even to her poverty-stricken rooms; and at a later date Madame Récamier, in the third floor of the Abbaye-au-Bois, was able to say that she was as much sought after there as in the days of her affluence in the Rue du Mont Blanc. Certainly society did not go to either attic or brick-floored lodging for what it found there in the shape ot material enjoyment, and we can only suppose that the charm of an intelligent woman's society and the need for womanly sympathy were strong enough attractions. Of Madame de Sévigné's social graces we have many testimonies, and Sainte Beuve says of her: "It is impossible to speak of women without first putting one's self into good humour by the thought of Madame de Sévigné." Mlle. Scudéry, in the Grand Cyrus, describes her as Princesse Clarinte in the most delightful manner. "She receives all the honest people, and inspires affection in all hearts that are capable of feeling it.... Nobody else has ever better known the art of being graceful without affectation, witty without malice, gay without folly, modest without constraint, and virtuous without severity."

No words of mine could paint the salon of Madame Récamier with the force of an eye-witness, Madame Mohl, who thus describes it:

"Nothing remarkable in private or public ever passed that was not known there sooner than elsewhere. Whoever had first read a new book, came to give an account of it; a sort of emulation made each habitué anxious to bring something to the common stock." "Tête-à-têtes, in a low voice, were entirely discouraged. If any of the younger habitués took this liberty they received a gentle chiding in a real tête-à-tête when everybody was gone. . . Whoever had an observation to make, contributed it to the common stock. Madame Récamier spoke little, but threw in an occasional word. . . . If any one in the circle was likely to have any special knowledge, she would appeal to him with an air of deference: if he chanced to be unknown and shy, her manner raised his spirits. Some who, before they frequented the Abbaye, could only talk to one or two persons, soon learnt to put their ideas into the compact form fitted for several. The number who were thus drawn into the conversation secured this advantage, that talking of the weather or of one's health, or any other egotistical topic, could scarcely be indulged in long. . . No one ever understood more thoroughly how to show off others to the best advantage,"

Italy at the present day can show many salons presided over by wit, and grace, and charm; in which the attractions of good eating and drinking (so powerful in our country) play small part in the proceedings. The wits and beaux and belles of society meet night after night at each other's palaces, and enjoy much pleasant social life, without any commensurate expense.

Few Italians are wealthy, as we esteem wealth; but lack of money is no crime there, and does not debar those who by birth and education are entitled to it from entering the sacred portals of society. Genius and talent are more potent charms than money-bags, and poor sculptors and musicians,

artists and authors, enter salons whose gates are closed to the appeals of Dives. Pecuniam in loco negligere maximum est lucrum.

First, perhaps, in the list of gifts which are necessary to a woman who aspires to the rôle of hostess, is that of sympathy. She who has a capacity for entering into another's situation, who has real interest in that situation, and who possesses the power to "rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep," is sure to be a beloved woman. We are all of us egotists, and nothing is so keenly interesting to us as what concerns ourselves. The man or woman who talks to us of our own affairs, and who exhibits a real interest in them, strikes a responsive chord. The devoted mother who has paid little heed to a rhapsody on Browning, is alive with keenest interest when the charms of her children are discussed. The newly married couple believe themselves and their mutual happiness, their home and their new furniture, of liveliest importance to mankind in general. The Valetudinarian values a kindly inquiry after the weak back, or the hacking cough. The sailor likes to "yarn" about topsails, fair winds, and turret ships. The soldier loves to "shoulder his crutch and show how fields were won." We are egotists. everyone of us, and it is only the cultivation of the graces of unselfishness and love for others which makes us ever care really for their welfare and happiness. Mrs. Procter, with more cynicism than charity, used to say: "Never tell people how you are: they don't want to know." The wish to speak of ourselves to others shows at least a desire for pity and for sympathy. How lovable and attractive, therefore, is she who shows an interest in our concerns, and invites us to talk of our beloved selves and our doings! How flattered and pleased we are! and how soon the interlocutor goes down on the tablets of our hearts as "a charming creature"

Absence of shyness, self-possession, and a ready wit, are invaluable attributes to her who would tenir salon. Diffidence and shyness are seldom understood in this world. They are apt to be confounded strangely enough with their opposites, pride and self-conceit. The social success of American women is largely to be attributed to their absence of shyness. They feel at their ease—and look it. They are natural and agreeable, because they are not torturing themselves as to whether they are

Madame de Staël's brilliant social gifts were stimulated and cultivated by the intellectual society which surrounded her in Madame Necker's salon from her childhood. Madame Récamier's receptions only ended with her death.

making the impression they desire or not. They feel sure of themselves and their looks and their company, and are unaffected and entertaining. Wit, alas! is a gift which no amount of cultivation can ensure. Its absolute spontaneity constitutes its value.

"True wit is nature to advantage dressed,
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed."

Another necessary endowment for a hostess is tact—the knowledge of how far to go without being intrusive; where to stop without incurring the charge of want of interest—an intuition which leads you to introduce the right people to each other, to say what gives pleasure, and causes you to avoid wounding people's susceptibilities. The woman without tact tells the fond mother that her child is "very small for his age"; that "it is surprising he cannot walk yet"; that she is sorry to see "how indifferently the new gown from Paris fits"; and that the contractor who undertook to relay the drains "is notorious for scamping his work."

"But of all plagues, good Heaven, thy wrath can send, Save, save, oh! save me from the candid friend."

Tact is a royal gift, and a noble one; a gift, curiously enough, too often despised in this world. Many foolish people pride themselves on being "above" tact. These have probably mistaken tact for finesse. A love of intrigue, and shifty managing ways are surely widely removed from the praiseworthy wish to give pleasure to others, and avoid paining them.

Vet another valuable attribute is repose. The woman who perpetually fusses about from guest to guest creates confusion, unrest, discomfort; breaks in upon conversations, and is, in a word, ill-bred. "And so," says one, "just as I was leaving the room what do you suppose happened?" At this juncture our restless hostess breaks in, carries off the narrator to be introduced to someone she would probably rather not know, and the interested listener is left for ever in suspense as to the startling event.

Then the salon of her who is musical to those who are not! Was ever a worse purgatory invented? The discussion of musical technicalities to him who cannot distinguish between "God save the Queen" and Mascagni's "Intermezzo"; and the absolute boredom to the non-musical of a whole evening devoted to the art! Again, how truly awful is the

salon or studio of an artistic woman to her Philistine friends! No well-invented excuses avail against her innocent density, "Can't come next week! Ah! well you must come the week after! I want you to see my last picture in the impressionist style. You know I used to be a pre-Raphaelite, adored Filippo Lippi, Botticelli, and Giotto, but since going to last year's Salon, I have completely changed. Yes! I am an "impressionist" now, and feel it to be the true form of art. the highest, the most intense. Imagine Botticelli troubling to paint all those stupid little flowers in the foreground of that picture at the Florentine Academy! What do they teach? What meaning is in them? How much broader and nobler is impressionism?" and so on ad nauscam. The victim of all this twaddle probably knows as little about the Umbrian School as he does of the modern cant of "Impressionism" versus "Realism."

And, no doubt, to make a salon really pleasant our hostess must keep her individual tastes in the background in deference to those of her guests. If she be a poetess, let her suppress all reference to the Muses, as far as she is concerned. If she be an artist, let her avoid placing easels and their contents in every available corner. If she be a musician let her exercise her art only so far as it gives pleasure to her guests. The woman who makes use of her drawing-room as a stage, whereon she can pose and make display of her gifts, excites the contempt and not the admiration of her friends. Her rôle should be that of bringing out the talents of her friends, and enabling them to shine.

L'art de tenir salon, on the whole, is not so easy a one as might be supposed. For its perfection unselfishness should be the keystone; a spirit of kindliness, of geniality, and of good fellowship, the edifice. Cross-grained, sour-tempered women have never shope as mistresses of salons.

"When we ourselves least kindly are,
We deem the world unkind,
Dark hearts in flowers where honey lies
Only the poison find."

In conclusion, let us hope that the day may come when the art of entertaining in its highest sense may be more widely practised in England; when the worship of money and luxury shall diminish; and when it may not be reserved for the rich man alone to enjoy the privileges and the pleasures of exercising hospitality.

FALLING IN LOVE.

By a Father Confessor.

FALLING in love is a subject on which I my own part, it is true that I have only fallen in love once, and I should not be so foolish as to seek to generalise upon a single experience. But I have been fortunate—sometimes unfortunate—in being made the depository of the affairs of the heart in the case of many others, and I believe that a plain statement of the secrets I am familiar with would give another proof of the saw, that truth is stranger than fiction. It is neither credit nor blame to me that I have listened to so many tales of love. For it is the last subject on which I would seek to pluck confessions. Neither do I descant to love-sick swains and maidens on the theme, nor pave the way for confidences by telling my own story. That is a secret between me and another. Yet as I sit and smoke at my fireside, or under a tree when on holiday, there seems to be something in the odour of the arcadia mixture I affect, which makes my friends disburden. other premise—I am not violating the confessional; for the only shrine at which I may be said to serve as a priest is that of the benign Nicotia.

Whether love comes at first sight or by gradual growth is a moot point. I give it with considerable confidence that the number of those who fall in love instantaneously and of those who do so by degrees is pretty equally divided. At all events here is a general law which may be taken for axiomatic. Men fall in love at first sight, and women respond in gradual course. Sometimes, of course, the process is reversed.

People who dispute the reality of love at first sight are merely ignorant of the whole matter. Over and over again I have known a man reach his prime without so much as being grazed by Cupid's dart, then suddenly be struck through the core by one glance-transfixed utterly, triumphantly, eternally. Nothing was further than love or matrimony from the mind of a scientific friend of mine who set out last summer to climb Mont Blanc. He joined the company of a dozen whom he had never seen before, and found himself tied by the scaling rope to a fair member, who was his neighbour in the string of climbers. Long before he reached the snowline he knew that something had happened to him which was of a different genus from all former experiences. The fair

American no longer "does" Mont Blanc or spends her time in "globe-trotting." She is settled down in a sunny nook in England, and watches her husband classifying biological specimens. Another friend of mine, very sensitive to the first influences of feminine society, but something of a cynic regarding most people's love affairs, asserts, with the certainty of a mathematical proposition, that as soon as he meets die Eine, fated to be his, he shall recognise her the instant his eyes light upon her. Romeo at old Capulet's ball, falling in love with the daughter of the house on the spot; King Arthur riding past the fair Guinivere, to find "that the light of her eyes smote into his life"; Dante at that house in Florence, seeing Beata Beatrix but once, and fired with a passion that seems still to throb-these classic lovers are to be matched in every age and every circle. Often, of course, an instantaneous passion proves to be no true intuition at all, but a mere delusive fancy. Still, just as often-I believe oftener-a man is not mistaken when he knows by an inner certitude, akin to moral intuition, that he is right in seeking to seal the apparition as his own for time and a day. Were you to question the unerringness of such a choice-

> "A warmth within the soul would melt The freezing critic's colder part; And like a man in wrath, the heart Rise up and answer 'I have felt.'"

Cases where it is the woman who falls in love at first sight are less frequent. The reason is that a woman's instinctive role with regard to the opposite sex is that of self-reserve. A sensitive woman waits for attention rather than seeks it. Dignity and modesty-these two pearls in the feminine coronet-forbid that she thrust herself into a man's notice. She will throw away her womanly affection upon none who has not in the first instance sought to be a candidate for such honours. A fine woman may be secretly pining for love of some man, and yet rather die than betray the fact. Nor could there be any more bitter humiliation for her than to allow her secret passion to cajole her into a voluntary confession, and then to find herself met with a rebuff. In such a case her love might sometimes turn to hate. Occasionally, however, it is the woman who falls in love.

Le grand passion, although the handmaid of real

religion, laughs at theological distinctions. The Pope is no match against Cupid. That little god snaps his fingers at papal bulls, social canons, and the wildest opposition of Mrs. Grundy. While in Germany, I knew a priest who was one of the most valued servants of Holy Church, and one of the most devoted. On his rounds of pastoral visitation he fell in love with a daughter of the Church. To the winds with ordination yows, ecclesiastical ambition, and the priest's piece of bread! The girl's parents pronounced anathemas, her brothers swore they would slay her renegade lover; but in the face of all he bore her off, and today their happy home is supported by a brilliant pen not unknown to the academic world. I confess I share Mr. Stevenson's contempt for the "luke-warm preference" which passes with so many for love. Let a man contend to the uttermost forso high and inestimable a prize as a woman's love! I judge those suitors well served who dangle round a fair one, eventually thinking they love her a little better than their dog, and who, after a languid courtship of fitful indifference, make proposals of marriage, to find that the hand has been given to some headlong lover, who has taken the citadel, as it were, by force. Listen, all dilatory suitors and languid lovers. A girl of spirit will pardon your modest income, will forgive your small stature, will overlook your squint eye, will even forget that you have had a youth-but one thing she neither will condone nor forget, namely, that you are not completely and self-abandonedly in love, that you prefer your comfort to winning her by some selfsacrifice, and that you would rather smoke your pipe by your fireside than walk ten minutes in the rain for a sight of her face!

Love, however, is often enough a gradual thing. Two people meet; and they have really at the centre the basal fires which can burn in a united flame; but these fires are not on the surface. There may be superficial incompatibilities which have to be overcome by a more intimate knowledge of each other. I have known a couple positively quarrel for three years, and at last fuse indissolubly together. The conditions of true love I believe to lie in the possession of common sympathies in the deeper feeling of the human heart. Opposites who fall truly in love are only apparently opposite Their opposition may be in complexion, in opinions

upon many things, in temperament even; but at the root of their being there is a common affinity. Apparently contradictory natures are often more properly to be described as complementary.

Love—what is it? How begot, how nourished? Hard questions. You may find two individuals with every element for a union. But the divine spark never comes. You cannot analyse and explain love, any more than you can life.

Bachelor friends have come to me and confessed their anxiety to marry. "Well, I'm sure you know a great many admirable and suitable young ladies," I have replied.

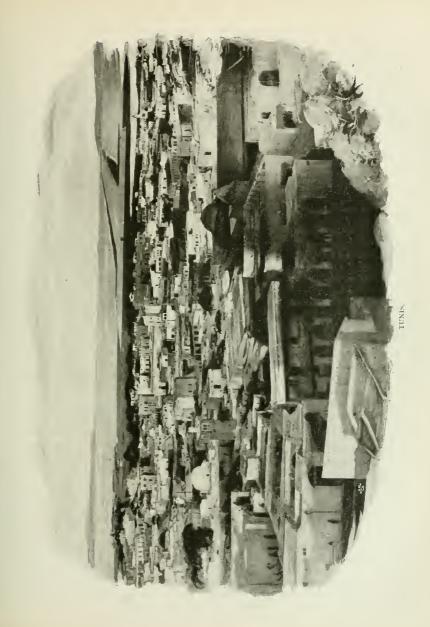
"Yes, 1 know a dozen who answer to every requirement of beauty, health, goodness, youthfulness, compatibility, accomplishments, refinement."

"Then why don't you choose one?"

"Simply because I can't fall in love with any of them." So again laughs the little god.

My wife is a great match-maker in the best sense. She cannot rest till she has every marriageable friend for whom she has an affection happily settled. Time and again we have laid the amatory train, and invited as guests to our house at the same time a carefully-selected couple, religion, art, literature, tastes in every direction, age, looks, social position-everything carefully considered. We have made up picnics of fourcomposed of the twain and ourselves. We have carefully lost ourselves in the depths of leafy woods. We have proposed music in the drawing-room, and at the first pretext my wife would escape, and I in time would follow. We have eagerly watched the progress of affairs-have lain awake of nights discussing points of affinity-have commented on this and that significant look and action. After three weeks my friend finds he must run up to the city, notwithstanding our pressing invitation to stay, and though he knows my wife's friend is to remain for another three weeks. He has had a charming time, he says. And after his departure my wife learns in confidence that the nearest approach to a hint of love was a remark that his stay had not been nearly so dull as it would have been had our fair guest not been present. It is no use.

To all matchmakers Cupid adopts the attitude of finger to nose. We are left to Shakespeare's doctrine (and he was a "smart man," as the Yankee said), that marriages are made in Heaven.



BY ELIZABETH A. SHAEP.

TUNIS, the Flower of the Orient, the quondam scourge of the Mediterranean; Tunis, the white city, the chief seat of Mohammedanism in north Africa, is of so great renown that the older city, Tunisium of the Romans, has passed into oblivion. Yet, as a city, it is old; older than Rome that subdued it; older than Carthage that overshadowed it, and whose fortunes it shared. Its origin is a matter of dispute. Some authorities consider it to be a Phenician colony; others conclude that it was built by an indigenous race before the builders of Carthage and of Utica put foot upon their shore.

Its names have been many. According to Leo Africanus, Thunes is identical with the Tarshis of the Bible. In medieval days it has been called El Hathira, the Green, on account of the beauty of its gardens. Little is known of the history of Tunis, considered apart from the fortunes of Carthage. Its secluded position, protected from the seaboard by a shallow lake, hindered it from reaching the eminence of its great rival, the City of Dido, and has secured to it a more prolonged existence. A stroll through Tunis, or round its walls, reveals no ancient ruins, nothing to tell of the sojourning in it of successive races. Only here and there delicately carved marble pilasters flanking a Moorish doorway with their heavy nailstudded doors; or again, the marble columns in palace courtyards or in the mosques, crowned with beautifully carved capitals, testify to the use that opulent Moors have made of the spoils of Carthage, whose treasures have been carried even as far as Genoa and Pisa.

Tunis lies between two salt lakes. The Chott of El Sedjoumi lies desertward, and is almost dried up in the summer heats; El Bahira is separated from the sea by a narrow strip of land on which Goletta, the fortified port and defence of the city, is situated. The white city slopes gently upwards from the lake Bahira, and is entrenched within Moorish crenelated walls, flauked with towers. At the culminating

point rises the citadel, the Kasbah, which, in bygone days, served as barracks for the Janissaries, and as prisons for the Christian slaves. From the Kasbah the view over the city is very fine. It lies spread out on either side like wings, or, as the Arabs picturesquely describe it, like the burnouse of the Prophet. Around, beneath, lies the dazzling white town, white as chalk, a mass of flatroofed houses, with here and there a slender minaret, whence twice a day the Muezzin calls the faithful to prayers; or a swelling dome, at times green tilled, of mosque or koubah. At one point a tall palm tree rises from amid the deep shadows of a quiet court and soars upright with its tuft of feathery foliage sharply defined against the vivid blue sky.

Beyond the white nucleus of the city the lake, intersected by the recently-opened canal, lies like a sheet of burnished steel under the African sun. On its outermost marge the narrow tongue on which Goletta is built seems to float on the water like a Venetian island, with behind it the faint line of the sea. To right and left the verdure of the plain (so arid and scorched in summer) is bordered by chains of low mountains; those to the right bearing the prominent twin peaks of Bou Kornine, that for centuries has served as a landmark to wanderers over the waste of sea or desert, and witnessed one of Hannibal's great military triumphs. On the seaward point of the curve of hills to the left of Tunis (always looking from the Kasbah) lies the little Moslem village of Sidi-Bou-Saed nestling on the hill-top. It marks the spot whereon once flourished the Phœnician city of Utica, overlooking the neighbouring hill upon which proud Carthage rose. The famous Byrsa, the citadel of Carthage, where once stood the temple of Dido, is now crowned by the chapel of St. Louis, and by the Roman Catholic cathedral built by the late Cardinal Lavigerie. The former marks the spot where the French king died, having

* A corruption of the Arabic words, Halk-el-Oned, The Throat of the Canal.

first—according to Moslem tradition—embraced the faith of the Prophet. Nothing now remains of Dido's city but its splendid site, the contracted outline of her military and commercial ports, the empty cisterns, and the foundations of the great triple wall which, in the days of its strength, gave accommodation for soldiers and stabling for horses and for elephants. Here and there are to be seen the excavated ruin of a one-time magnificent temple, and—those most reliable of all stone

testimonies to a great past—the excavated tombs of the Necropolis.

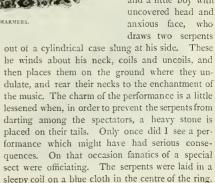
Between Carthage and her sister town of Tunis lies a great plain bordering the lake. Once it was thickly populated, here and there densely wooded. Now it is in part arid, in part cultivated; dotted here and there with the villas of rich Moors or of European consuls, situated for the most part at Marsa where the present Bey has his palace. One broad road runs thither from the city. On it may be met the wandering Arab with his bourrico (small donkey), or a Moor

his bourrico (small donkey), or a Moor on horseback with his wife on the pillion behind him, a camel and some sheep herded by their swarthy owner, or a carriage with closely drawn blinds that conveys the inmates of some harem from town to their country residence. Athwart the plain lie the ruins of the great aqueduct built by Hadrian to carry water to Carthage from Mount Zahgouan forty miles distant. It stretches across the Tunisian Campagna like the vertebræ of some antediluvian monster. It has been sufficiently restored to carry the water (by underground tubes where the aqueduct was too broken

to reconstruct) into modern Tunis. There, on the crest of the city near to the military drill-ground of Zouave and Turko, stands the Chateau d'Eau, whence the clear welling fountain rushes into the conduits of the town.

Adjoining the Kasbah stand the *Dar-el-Bey* or palace of the Bey, the grand Mosque, and the bazaars. In the open square in front of the palace, the Moors pass to and fro in their picturesque garments: a gandura (a kind of long shirt) of soft

cloth, embroidered in front with silk, that opens over a vest of silk of a different hue; a white or palecoloured burnouse, with silk braid and tassels; white socks. low shoes, and the national fez bound round with coils of Syrian muslin. They saunter along in twos and threes from the bazaars and mosque, or stand awhile in the square to watch the serpent charmers. In the midst of a small crowd sits a wild-looking Arab, in a dirty burnouse, playing on a primitive-looking bagpipe, and a little boy with uncovered head and anxious face, who





SERPENT CHARMERS.

After taking sundry long needles out of his nose, to the sound of flute and tom-tom, the charmer took off his turban, unplaited his long uncut hair, and swayed himself backwards and forwards, throwing his head energetically to and fro in the scorching sunshine, till the perspiration streamed down his face. Meanwhile, he half chanted, half declaimed with much fervour, and whenever the names of Allah Mahamet, Hussein, and Allah Mahamet.

24+

Allah, Mahomet, Hussein, and Abd-el-Kader the only words distinguishable to the ears of the infidel!) were spoken, appreciative groans of assent came from the spectators. Then he seized the serpents, swung them to and fro, and in his excitement he dashed them across the face of a little Moorish boy who pressed too close in his eager curiosity. The child ran away crying with fright; though he received no actual hurt.

Serpents are held in veneration in Tunis, probably in unconscious survival of some early form of serpent worship. I was told that



TUNISIAN JEWESS.

the serpent awakes from its winter lethargy, and glides into the living rooms to be fed. Its wants are attended to before those of the family, for



MCCR AND HIS WIFE AT HOME.

the creature's presence is considered as a lucky omen. Harm rarely results, for the serpent knows its benefactors and attaches itself to them. The scorpion only is feared, for it cannot be tamed, nor its coming and going depended on. Horrible tales are told concerning it. It is considered as a sign of female beauty among the Tunisian Jews, that the Jewesses should be extremely corpulent. In order to attain to this desired condition, the girls, when they reach a marriageable age, are artificially fattened. A bridegroom has been known to send a bracelet to indicate the size he wished his fiancéc's arm to be. The girl is kept in a dark cellar-like room, fed on sweet and fat foods, and made to lie all day on soft cushions in a shrouded light. One youthful bride left overnight in her temporary luxurious imprisonment, was found dead and discoloured on her bridal morning. A

scorpion had crawled upon her, become entangled in her hair, and had stung her to death.

The dress of these corpulent Jewesses is calculated to surprise Europeans. It consists of tight-fitting silken drawers, a loose silk blouse, which reaches halfway to their knees, long embroidered gaiter-like stockings, and very small high-heeled

Turkish slippers. On the head Jewess and Mauresque alike wear a small, stiff, conical hat of gold cloth, over which hangs a soft veil of fine silk muslin. It is obviously the survival of the old Saracen head-dress; a similar origin can be detected in the dress of the rich Moor when riding during the fantasias, and in the trappings of his horse. Out of doors the Jewess wears a larger silken veil over her head, which she folds round her. The Mauresque shrouds herself from head to foot in the long white haïk, and covers her face-excepting her eyes - with hideous black muslin. She is phantom-like and most unattractive; but the rich lady, when she walks abroad, is still more remarkable, for over her face hangs a wide embroidered black silk scarf which she holds out in front of her with her two hands in order to see where her feet tread.

Her maid with the black muslin face-covering goes with her to direct her steps.

The Bey holds receptions once a week in the Dar-el-Bey. There also he administers justice. It is a common sight to see in the courtyard a line of manacled delinquents squatting on their heels against the shadowed wall, stoically awaiting judgment, and presided over by a native police, whip in

hand. The Bey—the nominal ruler of Tunisia, who, in fact, is but the mouthpiece to the people of the wishes of the French Consul—lives in his palace at Marsa, on the sea near to Carthage. Disused palaces are many in number in this land. In the days of Beylical power no reigning prince would inhabit the palace of his predecessor, but

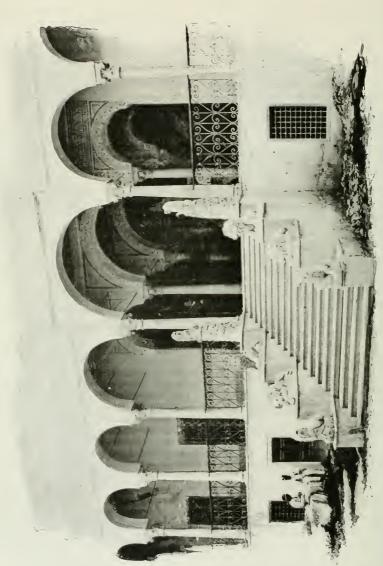


OUT-OF-DOOR COSTUME OF MOORISH WOMAN.

preferred to squander his peoples' money in building one for himself. Near to Goletta, at Hammam-el-Enf, there are palaces in partial ruin; while the huge pile of Mohammedia on the road to Oudina. built by Ahmed Bey in 1855, is now a total ruin, and has been despoiled of its decorations to adorn other princely residences. One of the sights of the town is the Bardo, the palace of the late Bey. famous for the beautiful arabesque carving in white plaster, one of the great achievements of Moorish art, and for the lionflanked marble staircase. There, in accordance with the will of the late Bey, the military band plays once a week in the empty audience chamber before a vacant throne. Occasionally the present Bey assists at this memorial function. Alas! the beautiful Moorish carved work is a dving art. Its cool appropriate decoration, surmounting the skirting

of delicate-hued tiles, is giving way to a meretricious French art, to gaudily-painted ceilings, crystal chandeliers, and cheap French furniture.

L'Orient s'en va! European civilisation, socalled, is encroaching in the Flower of the Orient, where, as elsewhere, it will inevitably destroy all that is exclusive and artistic of the old Moorish order. The change is great already. Not so many



ENTRANCE 10 THE PALACE OF THE BEY.

years ago the city gates were closed at night, and no European—other than slaves—could remain within. Now Italians and French inhabit many of the old Moorish palaces; part of the walls have been destroyed, and tramway-lines laid over their foundations. Between this old rampart and the lake a thriving modern French city is springing up, with streets at right angles, houses that are mere

square blocks. The Iews are overflowing there from the old city; the Maltese, the most thriving and laborious of the colonists, have their quarter; the English have their church and cemetery; and, now that the canal has been opened to the sea through the Lake Bahira, modern Tunis will have her own port, and will grow and flourish till the very life-blood is sucked out of the old city, which will remain a mere curiosity of the past. There is an old Arab saying: " Put an Arab and a Frenchman in the same pot and boil for two hours, and at the end there will be two different soups." So far, no rapprochement has taken place between n French city is springing up, angles, houses that are mere Jews and Christians inhabit t

A TUNISIAN DOORWAY AND DOOR-KEEPER.

the Europeans and Orientals, for their ways of thought, habits, and religions are wholly dissimilar. Only the young Moors, in many cases, frequent the French Roman Catholic schools to enable them to trade with better use with their "protectors." One of the old gates separates the old from the new town. The interior of the former presents a confused network of streets and lanes

that, with the exception of the two or three, are very narrow and tortuous, arched over in many places, and with occasional green creepers straggling over the walls. All the large houses have the moucharabies, or double barred and trellised windows of the harem, through which the imprisoned wives can see without being seen. The Iews and Christians inhabit the lower part of the

town, the Moors the upper. Two streets of shops lead to the upper part, where, close to the Palace and Kasbah. is the Grand Mosque, inaccessible to foreigners, and the native bazaars. Through all the changes that have taken place, these bazaars or "Souks." have retained their original character, and are the chief interest to the traveller.

They are a series of narrow, tortuous streets, with flat or vaulted roofs, that here and there have little square openings for light and air, through which green creepers trail. Some are roofed with bamboo and matting. On either side of these covered streets are rows of little square shops,

whose floors are about two feet from the paved way. In the morning the scene is full of animation and noise. People of many nations and many garbs pass to and fro, jostling and hustling each other. There goes the Moor in his soft-coloured garments, the dignified desert Arab in white burnouse and camel-hair ropes wound round his haik, the fur-capped Armenian, the ragged

Berber from the hills urges his little bourrico with its load; or a driver leads the ungainly, huge camel with treacherous eye, sneering lip, and long ostrich-like neck that undulates as it strides along on its soft padded feet. The Moor sits silent and crosslegged in his booth, patiently waiting till a purchaser accosts him. Bargaining, wary and

persistent is the method of transaction: a settlement once made, his word is inviolable. The Jew, clad in the handsome Turkish costume, solicits every passer-by; needless to say his gains are the greater. Occasionally, the veiled Mauresque or the portly Jewess pass along, while down the centre go men with armfuls of muslins, or silks. or jewelry, which they sell by auction, shouting their at the top of their voice. Each Souk. or street of shops, is devoted to one special trade. There is the Soul el-Attarin, or bazaar of perfumers; Souk-cl-Serajin, of the saddlers; Souk-

248

STREET OF ANDALLSIA.

el-Furashin, where carpets and gaily-coloured garments are exposed for sale; Souk-el-Turk, where arms are sold, &c., &c. The Souk of the perfumers has a vaulted roof, supported on slender pillars painted green and red. There—as in the days when St. Paul was a tentmaker—the rich men of the city send their sons to learn a trade. The

perfumery and saddlery are the aristocratic trades. And, indeed, the saddlery—which includes all embroideries of gold, silver, and silks on leather and velvet, together with the fine embroideries on silk—are the two outlets for Tunisian artistic taste, especially as now the beautiful wall carving in plaster is practically a lost art. All the embroi-

deries are worked direct with the needle upon the material, whether leather, silk, or velvet, without the help of traced design of any sort; and the Souk-el-Attarin is the great meeting-place for the grave gossiping and discussion over weighty municipal matters of the noble Moors; as the barber's shop was the centre of news in the palmy days of old Rome. There the dark-eyed, bearded Moors sit crosslegged, sipping coffee and smoking cigarettes with their shoes off; while their humbler brothers content themselves with a drink of water from theitinerant waterbearer, who carries his much - needed

refreshment in a terra-cotta jar, painted with roughly-executed designs, that date back to the days of Greek ceramic art. At four o'clock the Souks are vacated. Then pious Moors repair to their mosques; the doors are closed, and trusty dogs are stationed round about to guard the property till the following sunrise.

THE LAST LADY CRESSBROOK.

By R. MURRAY GILCHRIST.

THE hired cab drew up just as the train entered the station. An elderly lady, dressed in the plainest of black gowns, descended, and instructed the driver to bring a porter to help him to carry her husband across the platform. She had been very pretty once, and her eyes were still bright and clear; but her fair skin was covered with wrinkles, and her hair touched with grey. Perhaps her most interesting feature was her mouth; it was the mouth of an eminently love-worthy woman—it gave you the keynote of her nature—you might divine from it all the weakness and the tenderness of her soul.

Her husband was a clean-shaven old man with a boy's face and a statesman's head. For the last twenty years he had been paralysed, and the only part of his body that he could use was his right arm. He made sundry apologies for the trouble he caused, and the two men smiled pleasantly. The lady stood by, directing them how to lift him, and begging them not to strike his feet against the stone stairs.

"It is the first time he has been out of doors since he was ill," she said, in an undertone. "Pray do be careful!"

An empty carriage had been reserved for them: she arranged cushions and wraps on the seat until it was soft as a bed. When he was lying comfortably there she gave orders for the luggage to be brought. There were only two trunks, covered neatly with well-worn brown holland. As the cabman lifted them down, his eyes fell on the labels,

"Oh, I say, look 'ere." he said, "Lord Cressbrook, Knocton Hall, Derbyshire! Why, I thought it were an old preacher an' his wife. But these aristocrats they do travel shabby like."

At the door, just before the train started, she tipped them liberally, glad with the knowledge that at last she could give people money for their services.

"Thankye, my lady," the cabman said.

The train began to move; she turned to her husband, with a pretty flush in her cheeks:

"Did you hear that, Frank?" she said. "The cabman called me 'my lady.' It seemed so odd,

coming for the first time from anybody. I was quite startled."

"I don't see why you should be surprised, Georgie," he replied. "I always knew that you would be Lady Cressbrook some day. One thing annoys me though—you are more worthy to be a duchess than a poor baron's wife."

She had drawn off her glove; she laid a thin hand lightly on his lips. "I won't let you talk like that," she said, with a queer huskiness in her voice. "If all the joy in the world had been offered me in exchange for my own, I should only have slighted it. Each year I lived with you in those dingy lodgings only made me happier and happier—because you and I loved each other."

His eyes filled with tears; she gave a broken laugh, and looked out of the window. Soon after they left the town she saw green fields, and brooks, and woods, the first she had seen for many years. If only he, too, might see them! Her heart began to beat quite painfully.

"Frank," she said, "do you think if I held you up, you could look out, too? It is so beautiful. The trees are all the colours of the rainbow, but the grass is quite fresh yet. It has been a wet season."

"I should like, dear, but you're very tired, aren't you?"

She stooped and lifted him to a sitting posture, and put one arm about his waist, and with the other held his head to her bosom. He watched the passing landscape greedily, and asked her to open the window, and breathed for a short space the scent of a distant pinewood.

"Ah, there's a flock of sheep," he cried, "and, in the field beyond, a herd of short-horns. Those are herons floating over that piece of water—see how their legs hang backwards like cords. And there's a village spire—limestone—Saxon it must be. I say, Georgie, it's like travelling on one's honeymoon again."

"But I'm happier now than I was then," she said. "I think true happiness only comes to men and women after a lifetime of hardship. But," she added hastily, "it was no hardship of my own,

but the knowledge of how our narrow circumstances worried you."

He fell asleep with his head still on her breast, and though she was but feeble herself, she did not move till he woke, but sat drinking in the beauty of the country.

It was not until sunset that they reached their destination. The station stood in the midst of a large plain, where neither trees nor hedges grew, the fields being divided by mortarless limestone walls. A shabby old chariot, upholstered with olive green velvet was waiting there; the coachman, a stalwart country lad, came up smirking, hat in hand. She smiled very graciously, and congratulated him upon the ease with which he lifted Lord Cressbrook and carried him without effort, just as if he were a baby, to the carriage.

"Is it far to Knocton?" she inquired. Frank had only a faint recollection of the place, as he had visited his grandfather there fifty years before. As for herself, she had no idea of its whereabouts.

"Please ye, my lady, 'tis happen six mile," the coachman replied. Then he mounted the box and urged on the flea-bitten mare.

"This is our own carriage, Frank?" Lady Cressbrook said. "I have often wondered what it must feel like to drive in one's own carriage. It is very nice; how soft the springs are!"

Erelong the aspect of the country changed, and they entered a dale, flanked on either hand with huge white crags. From the sides, beneath the serrated skyline, that looked as if a crowd of ruined castles lay there, hung slender yews and rowans, the latter all bright with scarlet berries. At the side of the road a wide, clear brook ran over a bed of round pebbles, where no weeds grew.

"This is Knocton Dale, Georgie," Lord Cressbrook said. "I remember it very well. We used to practise archery on that flat, and to fish for minnows beside that great willow."

At the entrance of the village a triumphal arch of ivy and cardboard and tissue-paper had been erected in honour of their arrival. Above it was a transparency with the inscription, "God bless Lord and Lady Cressbrook," flaming in scarlet letters. As the carriage passed beneath, two young girls flung bunches of roses in, and a band, issuing from the doorway of "The Black Bull," began to play "See the conquering hero comes." The two

old people were thrilled. Lady Cressbrook's frail figure vibrated.

"It is good of them to welcome us like this," she said, "for they are so poor that every penny must be a consideration to them—just as it was to us. They are all our own tenants, too. It is a moment when we have a right to feel proud."

The carriage stopped at an iron gate, and the coachman got down and opened it, and walked beside the horse along a short avenue of limes. They passed a fish-pond, on whose bank stood a moss-grown temple. The moon had risen, and the water glittered brightly. All the coachway was overgrown with fine turf, and the ancient vehicle moved as if on wings. At last there came a noise of fountains crossing and splashing in a tank, and the sombre house which had been built by Lord Cressbrook's great-grandsire, in the style of an Italian villa, loomed in front. Only the windows of one wing were lighted, but the rigid outlines of the place were clearly visible.

The front door swung open, and an old steward and housekeeper, who had held their situations for thirty years, stood on the threshold. Lady Cressbrook was pleased with the clean simplicity of the woman's attire. From her belt hung a bunch of brightly-polished keys. She came forward and made a curtsey; the man welcomed them warmly. Lady Cressbrook shook hands with both.

"I hope we shall be comfortable together," she said. "It is a great relief to have someone who knows all about the house."

The coachman carried his master into the library and put him in a great chair by the fire. The dusty aroma of the books crept into Lord Cressbrook's nostrils; he made a motion as if to rise and examine the shelves, so completely for the nonce had he forgotten his weakness. His wife, however, hindered him gently.

"Tell me which you want," she said, "and I will pass it to you. Ah! that big copy of Beaumont and Fletcher."

As she moved, the housekeeper came in with a sealed note, which, she said, she had been bidden to deliver as soon after their arrival as was possible. Lady Cressbrook opened it; it came from Mr. Pyburn, the family solicitor—a veteran who lived in the nearest market-town—and it contained word that if it were quite convenient for his lordship to

receive him for half-an-hour that self-same evening, it would facilitate some of the legal business.

A gong sounded somewhere in the lobby; Lady Cressbrook rose and put her hands on the back of Frank's chair. In accordance with her written instructions a sleeping-chamber had been prepared for him on the ground floor. She pushed the chair over the carpet, opened the door, and seeing opposite a room containing in the middle a bed hung with faint rose-pink, she wheeled him there.

According to her wont, she undressed him herself and washed him and put on his clean evening shirt, just the same as she had done in the time of their poverty. All those years of weakness she had acted as his body-servant. A bunch of white roses from the conservatory lay on the table; she chose the finest and pinned it in his button-hole. Then she took off her travelling-clothes and donned a new gown of black lace, cut low at the breast, so that the charm of her round throat, that had once pleased him so, might still be visible. In the soft light of the wax tapers all the wrinkles of her face had disappeared, and in his eyes she appeared prettier even than when she was a girl.

The housekeeper came to the door and begged leave to push my lord's chair. Lady Cressbrook felt a foolish little pang of jealousy at the lightening of her load; but Frank answered:

"Ay, do. My lady has had so many years of nursing that it is time she should rest."

So the woman moved him, and his wife walked beside, her light skirt whispering against his knees. At table she could scarcely eat. She kept gazing at his face and smiling.

"It's the first evening for very many years that we've had such a delightful meal," she said. "This is home at last. All our troubles are over; we have nothing more to do but be happy and try to make others happy."

"I say, Georgie," he said, with a ring of mirth in his voice that gave her a touch of eerie pleasure, for it seemed as if he were her boy lover again, "you are looking most charming to-night! I have always been proud of my girl's beauty. That gown suits you admirably, but you want diamonds. Why, let me see, there should be some trinkets somewhere—they were mentioned in my uncle's will. I can remember my grandmother bedizened like an Eastern princess. I suppose Pyburn will put you in possession of them to-night."

After dinner they went to the drawing-room. It was a great lofty chamber whose walls were hung with pale blue silk, painted with rococo designs of cupids gambolling amongst flowers. There was a grand piano in a satin-wood case; ranged formally in the same positions as they had held from the first were gilt-legged chairs and settees covered with faded woolwork. Above the alabaster mantel, where two chaste nymphs upheld a cornice all bright with Dresden shepherdesses and bow vases, hung a full-length portrait of a girl in amber, with coquettish black curls sweeping her shoulders. The place was full of the clean, suggestive odour rooms of that period sometimes possess-just as if the dust that was removed every day were powder of roseleaves and cedar and sandal-wood.

Lord Cressbrook pointed to the piano. "I have not forgotten how you used to play, Georgie," he said. "Do you think you could manage that 'Last Waltz' of Weber?"

She lifted the lid and stumbled through the tune. Her fingers were no longer supple, now and again the chords were lamentably unequal; but yet the music was both sweet and plaintive. In the pause that followed she heard the church bells ringing out full chimes.

"Listen, Frank," she said. "Our welcome isn't over yet. These poor folk are trying to make us even happier."

Mr. Pyburn was announced. He entered and congratulated them with courtly, old-fashioned etiquette. He was a stiff little fellow, yellow as a nummy, with a Roman nose, and a voluminous white cravat. He affected not to observe my lord's weakness, but took the chair by his side and entered into the necessary business.

When the papers were signed, Lady Cressbrook wished to hear about the people of Knocton.

"I am afraid, sir, that there is a great deal of poverty in the village," she said. "Lord Cressbrook and I always understood that the land was very unfertile, and that since the decline of lead mining many of the older men and women have been reduced to terrible straits."

"It is too true, madam," he replied. "It was a great trouble to the late lord during his illness, that he had been unable to alleviate their suffering. But he declared that the estate brought in only enough to maintain the house reputably."

"Can nothing be done?" Lord Cressbrook

asked. "Is there no almshouse, or anything of that kind?"

"There is not, sir. An almshouse would be a great boon. If it were possible to help them—then an almshouse, and the starting of some industry (they have now a prosperous shoe factory in the next village), would be the saving of Knocton."

Lady Cressbrook sighed; she felt that her happiness was being dimmed. It was, indeed, true that the income from the land would narrowly suffice; yet she felt that it was her duty to help. She sat resting her chin in her palms, peering into the heart of the fire. Her husband spoke again soon.

"Mr. Pyburn," he said. "I presume that there are some jewels. If you know where they are, I should like my wife to see them."

"Certainly. They are in a safe in the library, I have the key here. I will bring them now, the inventory is with them. There are some very fine trinkets; the late lord valued them as being his mother's dower; they are estimated as being worth ten thousand pounds."

He went away, to return soon carrying a large brass-bound box with a complicated lock. Then, as all the business was done, he left them alone together. Lady Cressbrook raised the lid and took out the cases one by one. The first contained a set of sapphires, large, glittering stones in heavy bands of gold. Frank eyed them curiously, and touched them with his fingers. Afterwards his wife showed him pearls and emeralds, and a necklace of table diamonds.

My lord dangled the last before her face, and bade her put it on. She obeyed him, and he asked her to kiss him.

"I have always wanted to see you in diamonds,"

he said. "How wonderfully they become you. Go over to the glass, Georgie, and look at your-self."

She had brought out the last set, of enamel and tortoiseshell, quaint worthless things that had not been worn for a century.

"These are best suited for me," she said, with a gay laugh.

In the mirror she saw the necklace glittering above her breast, like a living snake. She pressed the stones to her lips. Then she formed a mighty resolution.

"Are all these things mine, Frank?" she said. "Mine, my very own—to do what I like with—to give away if I wish?"

He understood. "They are altogether yours. We have no children, no near relations, who can wear them. I am even in doubt as to who will be master here when you and I are gone."

She stood on the hearth smiling joyfully. "As they are mine then, they shall be sold—used for the lives of our people."

With that she took off the diamonds and put the tortoiseshell bracelets on her wrists, and the necklace on her neck.

"These I should like to keep, for your wife, Frank, must not be without jewels," she said, almost coquettishly.

He stroked her head fondly. "My good, good girl," he said. "God will give you a crown of better jewels"

She stooped and put her face against his: both were weeping.

"I thought we were happy before," she sobbed; "but now it seems as if we lived altogether in Heaven."





CHAPTER XII.

MARY'S INTERCESSION.

As Mary Errol, with a heart brimful of happiness, passed up the gravelled walk leading to the door of her home, she was surprised to find the parlour in darkness, save for the flickering of the firelight, which, on approaching the window, showed her that the room was empty. It was the hour when the family assembled for tea, and yet, when she looked through the window, she saw that only one cup and saucer had been set down. What had happened? Where could they all be?

In a moment joy gave place to the gravest apprehension, and she hastened into the house to learn the cause of so unwonted an occurrence.

Before she reached the door, however, it was opened by Betsy, who, with a face that confirmed her fears, motioned her into the kitchen. Mary followed, her dismay increasing at every step. The servant then cautiously closed the door, and, placing a chair for her mistress, which, however, anxiety prevented her from taking, began her communication.

"Eh, sirs! Miss Mary," she said, raising her hands in an attitude of great distress, and shaking her head, "there's been an unco ruppit since ye gaed oot! I hinna mind o' the like o't since the day I got my airles frae yer mither, puir body!"

"What do you mean, Betsy?" demanded Mary in nervous impatience. "What has happened?"

"Sit doon, Miss Mary, an' I'll tell ye a' aboot it," continued Betsy, drawing the chair closer. "An' dinna look sae scared: maybe it'll no turn oot sae bad after a'."

Mary sat down, still fixing an apprehensive look on the woman's face.

And then followed a long account, in the honest woman's forcible Doric, of how Kenneth had brought Mr. Lesly home to tea, preparatory to a visit to the theatre; how they had insisted that Ronald should accompany them, although he had declined to do so; how Mrs. Errol had frowned disapproval on the project, and treated the visitor with such frigid courtesy, that Ronald, from sheer love of contradiction, had been exceptionally cordial towards him: and how, after the departure of that gentleman with Kenneth for the theatre, so violent a dispute had ensued between Mrs. Errol and her elder son, that she had been obliged to retire to bed, completely prostrated by the excitement.

Mary rose, her face still wearing a sad look, and prepared to go to her mother's room.

It was in darkness, save for the moonlight which shone through the window-blind.

Soft as was her footstep, Mrs. Errol heard it, and, looking up from her pillow, said:

"Is it you, Mary?"

"Yes, mother; I have just returned, and heard from Betsy that you had gone to bed," replied Mary, seating herself on the bedside, with her shawl half thrown back.

"Ay, and did she tell ye what sent me to bed?" rejoined Mrs. Errol. She spoke in the Scottish dialect at all times, and the musical cadence of her voice lent it a peculiar charm.

"Oh, yes, mother," returned Mary in compassionate tones; "she told me Mr. Lesly had been here again, and all that happened afterwards. I am very sorry. I cannot understand why Kenneth likes that man."

"It's no only Kenneth that likes him, Mary," said Mrs. Errol, with increasing earnestness. "Ronald seems as bent on keepin' company with him as his brother. To-night, when they were here, Ronald showed him far mair attention than Kenneth; and when I checked him for it, he spoke as I never thocht ony son o' mine would speak to me."

The mother's wounded heart spoke in the broken accents with which these last words were uttered.

"Oh! never mind him, mother," said Mary, grieved to see her mother distressed. "You know, when he is angry, he speaks and acts very unlike himself, and he generally suffers more in humiliation afterwards than those his hasty words have injured. I don't think he really cares at all for Mr. Lesly; he only patronises him because we dislike him. You know the spirit of contradiction is very marked in Ronald."

"I ken that weel, Mary; but it's worse than contradiction to encourage his brother in an acquaintance that canna do him ony gude. He should remember his brother is four years younger than himsel', and hasna—mair's the pity!—his firm, ay, stubborn will; and besides, Kenneth, like his father, is ower ready to trust folk. That's the danger, Mary."

"I know it, mother; and Ronald might know it, too. I mean to tell him so. But I don't think Kenneth will cultivate Mr. Lesly's society very much more; there is a much stronger attraction for him at the Castle now."

Mrs. Errol derived comfort from these last words, not only as far as they affected the subject they were discussing, but because they reminded her of the restitution to Kenneth, in large measure, of the privileges lost to him through her marriage with his father.

She remained lost in a train of thought for some time; and her daughter, perceiving that she had succeeded in her efforts at consolation, proceeded to divert her mind into another channel, though, as it lay in the direction of her own dearest interests, she found some difficulty in beginning.

After the pause of silence had lasted for several minutes, she broke it, half-hesitatingly, saying:

"I met Raymond Dunbar to-night as I was coming home, and——"

She stopped, and Mrs. Errol, remarking her embarrassment, became at once alert, though she spoke not a word.

Mary's head had drooped, and she was tracing invisible figures on the bed-quilt with her finger. The effort to deliver her message seemed to have bereft her of power to articulate a word. After one or two ineffectual struggles, however, she managed to say:

"Mother, he has asked me to be his wife."

Mrs. Errol was evidently much affected, but she only asked in reply:

"And ye didna refuse him, I hope?"

"No, mother; but I told him it could not be for many a year."

"Eh, lassie! I'm glad you've got sae gude a man. I aye likeit that laddie since the first day I saw him, and I'm sure he'll mak' a gude husband to you. Though, I'll miss ye sair, Mary."

"You'll never miss me at all, mother; for we are both agreed that, when I marry, you will come and live with us. Raymond wishes it; indeed, I would not have consented to marry him on any other condition."

"We'll no talk o' that i' the noo, but it's just like him to think on me. Onyway, I'm thankful ye have accepted Raymond Dunbar; for there's no anither man I could hae trusted ve to sae readily. I whiles feared that young callant, Harry Douglas, would get roond ye wi' his winsome ways; and loth would I be to have you mak' the experience your mother made. Your father was as fond o' me as ever man was o' woman, and yet his love cost him dear; for, though he never rued his choice, he missed the life he had been used to. It's different wi' the man that marries abune him, for if he has good looks and gentle manners, his wife will sune establish a footin' for him in her ain sphere. Ay, ay; I'm very glad ye've accepted Dunbar, and I'm sure he'll mak' ye happier than ever ve would hae been as the wife o' Harry Douglas,"

"Oh, mother, what makes you think of such a thing? Nothing ever passed between Harry Douglas and me but mere interchanges of friendly feeling. You know how frank he is with everyone. I wish you had never suggested such a thing to me, because I won't be able to treat him as I used to do. It's a mere fancy of yours."

"Maybe; onyway, I'm pleased your choice has fixed on Dunbar; and I wish ye baith every happiness."

Mary stooped down to receive her mother's embrace; and if tears were shed, they were certainly not tears of grief.

A knock at the door was heard at this moment, and Betsy entered with a tray containing two cups of tea and some slices of toast.

"I kent ye wad baith be the better o't," she announced by way of apology. "There's naething sae gude for a sair heid as a cup o' tea."

There was something so cheering in the very tones of the woman's voice that both Mrs. Errol and Mary were insensibly affected by it; and, as she bustled about to get a shawl for her mistress' shoulders, and to fetch and light the lamp, they began to brighten up. Mrs. Errol raised herself on her pillows to taste the cup of tea, while Mary went to assist in getting the lamp, which Betsy seemed unusually slow in finding.

"It's on the mantel-shelf! don't you see it, Betsy?" she inquired, stepping to the fireplace.

But Betsy, in a mysterious whisper, said:

"Wheesht! Maister Ronald's doon the stair, as quate an' douce as ony lamb. I'm thinkin' he has come to himsel!,"

Mary's face changed slightly, but she calmly lit the lamp, and took a seat by her mother's bed, chatting with her as they partook of their light repast.

"By-the-bye, mother," she said, "it has just occurred to me at this moment that if Kenneth went to the theatre, he must have gone alone, because, when we were coming home, we met Mr. Lesly going along the shore."

"Along the shore?" echoed Mrs. Errol. "Are you sure it wasna some other body? They left the house together to gang to Lynnburgh."

"Well, I certainly saw Mr. Lesly on the shore just before I came in," declared Mary. "I know him too well to mistake him. Raymond saw him, too."

"Then, whatever made them change their plan? They intended goin' to Lynnburgh to see the play when they left this house."

"Why, mother, I think I can explain it," cried

Mary, with eagerness. "Yesterday, when we were standing round the church door, I heard Harry Douglas asking Kenneth to meet a few friends at the Castle to-night. Kenneth must have forgotten it until after he left you, and then he would start for the Castle at once whenever it recurred to him. No doubt that is the explanation. So, you see, it bears out what I was saying about the stronger attraction at Douglas Castle."

With these encouraging words, Mary proceeded to remove the tea-tray and adjust the bed-clothes, so that her mother might soon fall asleep. When she was quite comfortable, and lay quiet on her pillow, Mary stole softly from the room.

Outside on the landing she paused, however, as she heard her brother's gruff cough in the parlour below. It seemed to her as gruff as his words were likely to be when he heard what she had got to say. Still her resolution was taken, and down she went to beard the lion in his den.

And truly it was a very formidable and stately lion that confronted her as she entered the room where her brother was. He had just risen to fetch a book from an upper shelf of the bookcase, and his sinewy, firm-built frame showed to advantage in the act of reaching up to it. Although fully his brother's height, his well-expanded chest and broad shoulders made him look of inferior stature. He was altogether of a more massive make, and bore an impress of strength, both physical and mental, in every limb and feature. His face was handsome, though a certain flashing of the black eyes at times, and quick contractions of the brow, marred its beauty. There was an air of pride, too, in the poise of his shapely head, with its clustering ringlets, and in his firm, manly tread as he walked. The rich tint of his complexion contrasted well with the glossy black of hair, eyebrows, and moustache, making a combination very pleasing to most eyes. Yes, everybody agreed that Ronald Errol was a handsome man, while, at the same time, they owned to being a little afraid of him; an impression confirmed on further acquaintance. For, as Betsy frequently affirmed, he was "unco maisterfu'," and could not brook opposition from any quarter. Naturally possessed of a strong will, which the circumstances of his early life and opening manhood had tended to foster, and becoming so early the sole support and director of the family, he had come, as a matter of course, to be ready to assert his privilege as one of the "lords of creation" to command and exact obedience from all under his sway. It is true his rule was influenced only by motives of the purest disinterestedness and kindness. He was, indeed, the very soul of honour; and he never resorted to harshness except when thwarted. This exception, however, made it decidedly hard to live peaceably with him; for, let a man be ever so just and righteous, if he is never to be crossed in any wish or purpose or idea without a display of temper, woe be to the other members of his household! Such was precisely the situation of the Errols in regard to Ronald: they were constantly made to suffer from his despotic disposition.

It will readily be understood, therefore, that no small amount of courage was needed to qualify his sister for the task she had proposed to herself. Yet, although she was unaware of it, her quiet determination and steady adherence to whatever she deemed right and true, whether in opinion or action, made her a more formidable opponent than even Mrs. Errol with her occasional bursts of indignation and violent opposition. It caused him to feel that she owned a power which all his domineering propensities could not shake. Her calm composure amid his most stormy demonstrations had the effect of making him somehow ashamed of himself, even while he resented it.

Even to-night when she came into the room, her face indicating sadness rather than displeasure, he felt rebuked and humbled in spite of himself, and shrank from the glance of her clear brown eye. He was determined, however, not to betray any such weakness, and proceeded to busy himself with the reading (of a scientific nature) which usually occupied him in the winter evenings.

Mary took up her sewing from a work-basket, and seated herself by the fire without a word.

Presently Ronald, in a tone of affected indifference, asked:

"Where is mother?"

"In bed," replied Mary, casting a very significant look on her brother, beneath which he tried not to wince as he rapidly turned over the leaves of his book.

"And I suppose I am to blame for it?" he presently said, knitting his brows fiercely.

"If your conscience acquits you, our blaming you cannot be of any importance," said Mary, meeting his angry look unflinchingly. Finding this speech unanswerable, he, like most people when foiled in an argument, proceeded to turn the discussion into another channel, saying:

"I think, in the name of courtesy at least, you and mother might bring yourselves to treat a visitor with some show of respect: I, for one, must protest against such treatment as Mr. Lesly received here to-night from mother. If he had been the veriest rascal in the place, she could not have shown more distaste of his company; and, until you can point to some sensible excuse for your prejudice against him, I must continue to disapprove of your conduct, and do what I can to counteract it."

The irritation with which he spoke increased as he went on, and, when he finished, he gave his chair an angry jerk, as if to show that he neither could nor would be answered.

But Mary, still undaunted, proceeded: "If you make courtesy the ground of your argument, let me ask you if you consider it courteous in Mr. Lesly to continue to frequent a house where he sees his presence is so unwelcome, and to which mother never invited him?"

Ronald was again nonplused, but he evaded the thrust by saying:

"Mr. Lesly may surely be pardoned for concluding that an invitation from Kenneth is tantamount to one from mother?"

"I think mother has disabused his mind of that idea sufficiently to have prevented him from repeating the mistake so often as he has done. If he had been a gentleman, he would have discontinued his visits long ago; and the fact that he persists in his intimacy with Kenneth, knowing how much we disapprove of it, seems to me a pretty strong indication that he has some other motive for it than pure, disinterested friendship."

"And will you be good enough to tell me what you have discovered that motive to be?" was Ronald's satirical question.

"I fear my knowledge of characters ot his stamp is not deep enough to afford me a clue in this case," said Mary; "but I am certain it is not Kenneth's well-being."

"You reason admirably, Mary; because it is not one motive, it must be another. But how did you become certain that he was determined to injure Kenneth?"

"Because Kenneth has not been the same since he became acquainted with that man. You yourself might have noticed that he has been less and less at home of late, and that he seldom gives any but the vaguest answers to any questions we ask about where he has been. He seems unwilling that we should even know he has been with Mr. Lesly, and I have noticed him employ artifice to prevent our knowing it. Yes, Ronald, if you had been less headstrong in the matter, you would have observed that Kenneth is more constrained in his manner to us; that he shuts us out from his confidence to a great extent—in fact, a barrier has grown up between him and us, and Mr. Lesly has put it there."

"I see there is no use trying to combat a woman's prejudice," continued Ronald, in the same strain as before. "The upshot of all you have said is simply this: that you dislike Mr. Lesly, reason or no, and fancy he is Kenneth's enemy. I require some more convincing proof of his guilt, and until I get it, I mean to act toward him as I have done, no matter what you and mother may say to the contrary."

"Then, Ronald, I have only this to say: should our suspicions of Mr. Lesly be verified, should his influence over Kenneth continue unchecked, and bring about the result we have been fearing, you will bitterly reproach yourself for having slighted our advice. As mother was saying, Kenneth's disposition is very different from yours; his will is as weak as yours is strong, and so he is a much more likely victim of a bad man's designs. You, as his brother, should rather seek to caution him against danger than encourage him in courting it."

"I have heard as much of this nonsense as I can listen to, Mary. If you think I will be scolded into compliance with your absurd prejudices, you are vastly mistaken. Let mother come and speak to me herself if she has any fault to find with me, instead of employing you as her deputy."

"I am speaking entirely on my own responsibility; though I admit that the sight of her tears, caused by your unkindness, compelled me to remonstrate on her behalf. However high may be your estimate of Mr. Lesly, I think the wishes of so good a mother as ours should claim some small consideration from the children she has borne so much for."

With these words, Mary left the room. Ronald, though he tried to exclude them from his mind, found that they rankled there like a Parthian wound dealt by the retreating adversary. For, when she uttered them, Mary knew well that, if all her other arguments failed, these last words relative to his mother's claims would find a response in his heart, since devotion to his mother had always been a prominent virtue in Ronald's character; and he had taken no small pride in making compensation to her for all her previous sufferings and hardships on his behalf.

Do as he would, science could not interest him that night, and not long afterwards Mary heard him come upstairs to his room.

She, however, had no thought of retiring yet awhile; another painful task awaited her which must be undertaken ere she could seek repose. Accordingly, after waiting till all was quiet, she stole again downstairs.

The fire was burning low in the grate, but she replenished it, and, taking up a book, which happened to be Milton's "Paradise Lost," seated herself by the hearth to read. The passage on which her eye lighted was that describing the mustering of the fallen angels in hell by Satan, to whom he declares:

"Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven."

Somehow the spirit of pure malignancy embodied in the speech of the Prince of Darkness chimed in with the current of her thoughts, and she read on until, insensibly, her attention wandered to the subject nearest her heart, and she fell into a reverie. The reverie deepened until it became a dream, and she was figuring in a marriage festival. Around her white robes and jewels and flowers were gleaming, but she recked not of them, for her eye rested on one radiant form that stood in the midst, the admired of all admirers: it was Ada Douglas; but her face, dimly seen through the gossamer veil, was strangely altered. The features were pale, and transfigured to an unearthly beauty like that of an angel. The tiara of diamonds that sparkled on her white brow seemed like a crown of glory. Another form was by her side: it was Kenneth; but she hardly seemed conscious of his presence, nor of the love that beamed on his fair face as he gazed upon her. Suddenly a dark figure stole between them and thrust them asunder. In another moment the scene was changed: all was confusion and dismay and darkness. Lamentations and cries of woe resounded everywhere; but,

above them all, she heard Ada's voice calling to her for aid. In an agony she thought she was groping her way in the direction of the voice, when, with a frightened start, she woke to find herself in Kenneth's arms, recalled, probably, to consciousness by hearing him pronounce her name in soothing, questioning tones.

"Mary! Mary!" he cried; "what is the matter?"

But the revulsion of feeling, heightened by her recent excitement, was too strong, and she burst into tears.

Kenneth bent down, stroking her brown hair with one hand, and asking what dreadful nightmare she had just awakened from.

When the nervous fit had passed, she said: "It was only a dream. I have been thinking about you so much to-night that I dreamt of you, and carried my thoughts into my dream. How long have I been sleeping? When did you come in?"

"You must have been sleeping a long time, for the fire is nearly out," he answered, throwing himself into a chair opposite, and passing his shapely hand through the masses of clustering ringlets that strayed over his brow. "I came in just now and found you trembling all over, and moaning in your sleep. Why have you not gone to bed, Mary? Do you know what time it is? Nearly two g'clock."

"Oh, Kenneth! Then you were not at the Castle? Have you walked home all the way from Lynnburgh?" asked Mary in grave concern.

"Yes; why not?" he answered, trying to avoid her honest, questioning look. "I would walk twice the distance at a later hour to see such acting as I aw to-night."

"Was Mr. Lesly with you?" questioned Mary, still fixing her clear, searching eyes upon his face.

Kenneth changed colour slightly, as the disagreeable episode of the early part of the evening was thus brought suddenly to his recollection; but he briefly answered: "He came home with me."

"I thought he intended to go with you," pursued Mary. "Did he not leave the house with you?"

"Yes; but he went home for something he had forgotten, and came afterwards."

"I met him shortly after six o'clock on the shore near the Black Cliff as I was coming home. That was surely out of his way?"

Kenneth seemed slightly startled by this an-

nouncement, but he merely remarked: "Yes, I daresay; but he has a preference for the shore. However," he broke off, "it's getting very late, and we must get to bed. You look sorely in need of yours, you silly little dreamer."

He placed his hands affectionately on her shoulders as she rose from her chair to meet him, and looked coaxingly into her face, as if deprecating the reproof he saw she was about to administer.

"Kenneth," she said in deeply earnest tones as she looked up into his handsome face, "I am distressed about you. I know what happened to-night, and poor mother has been terribly vexed. I stayed up because I wanted to speak to you about it. Oh, Kenneth, listen to me! Do you think mother or I would interfere with your happiness in any way? If you do, you wrong us grievously. It is our love for you that makes us apprehensive. You know you are very easily influenced, and this man Lesly seems to have more power over you than anyone else. Has he exerted that power in a right direction?"

"Mary, listen to the only answer I can give you," interrupted Kenneth, a frown replacing the smile on his face, while he leant back on the mantelpiece at some distance from her. "I am sorry for what happened to-night. I need hardly assure you, Lesly will never cross our threshold again after such a freezing reception as mother chose to give him. But, so long as we are associated in business, I must be on friendly terms with him. I am bound to be so for another reason; I mean the kindness he has shown me from the first day I entered the Custom-house. Do you not see yourself, Mary, how impossible it is for me to give the cold shoulder to a man I must meet every day? If you would think of it a little, you would not persist in your unreasonable demands."

"We don't ask you to renounce him altogether; we only ask you to give him less of your company in leisure hours, and to be more with us, as you used to be, Kenneth," said Mary, standing before him almost like a suppliant.

He looked at her pleading face, and a smile came once more into his own as he answered in his gay, playful tones: "Well, you incorrigible tease, I think I might safely promise that, if it were not that my leisure hours will be henceforth pretty freely claimed elsewhere. There now, are you satisfied?"

The kind words were so welcome that she threw her arms around his neck and kissed him, hiding a rising tear or two on his shoulder the while.

"Oh, Kenneth," she presently said, "do you know I had a terrible dream about you when you came in just now. I thought something came between you and Ada, and that——"

"Oh, you little goose! You thought, did you?" he interrupted, drawing her into his arms, and stroking her silky brown hair. "You are always thinking nasty things of your troublesome brother. Something between us, indeed! Ah, you little know what you're talking about, sage monitor; only one thing can come between her and me, and, pray God, it may not come till life has ceased to be a blessing."

The fervour with which these words were uttered banished the sister's fears so effectually that she made no audible response, but kept a firm hold of the hand that rested on her shoulder, inwardly rejoicing that she had regained the confidence she had thought lost.

Kenneth, too, seemed for the while lost in reverie, but presently he awoke from it and said: "By-thebye, Mary, Harry wishes us all (mother excepted, of course), to come over to the Castle to-morrow afternoon, and accompany them to Lynnburgh; they are going to the play. Harry and some of his friends were there to-night; but I preferred to go alone, not being known to some of them, though he threatened vengeance for my incivility. He says he won't be denied a second time, however, and he is coming here to-morrow to persuade mother to let you join the party. Now, don't put on that grave, Puritanical air, Mary, just as if you would like to shut up all the theatres in the land. You have never seen a play, so in justice you must suspend your judgment till you have. And I will vouch that when you have seen Beatrice Ormond in "Romeo and Juliet," you will think very differently of the stage."

Conflicting emotions were at work in Mary's mind, and called up a flush to her cheek. She turned a perplexed look on her brother, who had poised himself against the mantelpiece, with his hands clasped behind his back, and was watching the effect of his words on his sober little sister with an amused air.

"Kenneth, you know this is out of the question," said she. "Mother objects on principle to stage-

plays, and I'm quite sure she would never consent to my going. Besides, even if I cared to go with you to the theatre, I think the very probability of meeting Mr. Lesly there would be sufficient to deter me."

"Then come and shield me from his company," persisted Kenneth, in the same light vein, though she fancied there was an undertone of seriousness in the words.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"Only that your coming will effectually keep him at a distance. Do you know what he once said of you, Mary? He declared he was afraid of you. You will consider that a compliment, no doubt?"

"Yes, I am glad of it; that is just what I wish him to feel. And Kenneth, to prove to you how sincerely I wish your welfare, and how little prejudice sways me in this matter, I will go with you to-morrow night, provided mother will allow of it, and the only favour I ask in return is, that you will yield a little more to the wishes of mother and me from this time."

Kenneth burst into a merry laugh as he shook her by the shoulders and said: "'Measure for measure,' Mary; you won't grant a favour without exacting another. All this long altercation has simply been 'much ado about nothing'; however, 'all's well that ends well,' and 'love's labours' have not been 'lost' in this case. There, you see, how witty the stage is making me—— But do you hear what o'clock that is? Actually two in the morning, or, as Betsy would say, 'the sma' hoors,' and here are we not even thinking of bed. Who is to blame? You or I, Mary? Well, I need hardly ask; but, come, we must really go now. I'll put out the light."

"One word, Kenneth," she pleaded; "you will see mother to-morrow, won't you, and——"

"Say I won't do it any more. Yes, yes, you inveterate plague. Now, off with you, unless you wish to tumble over the chairs, and alarm the sleeping household."

Mary took the warning and ran upstairs, but she waited on the landing till he came bounding lightly after her, when she kissed him once more, whispering: "Good-night. You have made me very happy; I am sure to have pleasanter dreams when I fall asleep now."

"I'm sure they won't be half so pleasant as

mine," was his answer; "but then, you see, I have a pleasanter subject to dream of. Goodnight,"

With that bright smile on his face he left her, and its radiance made very sunshine in the sister's heart. His words had cancelled her fears, and she began to anticipate, with some degree of certainty, a return of the happiness they had enjoyed before. His amiable temper would soon effect a reconciliation between himself and his mother, whose favourite child he undoubtedly was, while Ronald, though perhaps less readily, would ultimately make his peace with her too. The thought made her perfectly happy; so happy, in fact, that she almost forgot Raymond Dunbar. If her lover had a rival, that rival was her brother Kenneth, toward whom she cherished a more than sisterly love, a love partaking of intense admiration, which their long separation had tended to increase, and a devotion to his welfare so unobtrusive and entire, that he himself hardly noticed it. Even to-night her own happiness had been in abevance until satisfied that his was secure; and so in her dreams he was ever associated with Raymond Dunbar, while she herself hardly seemed to play any part save to love and tend them both.

CHAPTER XIII.

YOUTH AND AGE.

WHEN Mary Errol awoke next morning, the sudden recurrence to memory of the varied experiences through which she had passed on the previous day made her almost doubt whether she were still dreaming. Her betrothal to Raymond Dunbar, her interviews with her mother and brothers, and, lastly, the discomposing prospect of the visit to the theatre, with which so many unpleasant reflections were associated-all these subjects seemed more like the rapid transition of events in a dream than veritable realities. Realities, however, they assuredly were, as the rebounding happiness of her heart soon proved; and if that had not been sufficient, a smart rap at her chamber door, and Kenneth's voice inquiring whether she were ready to come down, would have convinced her.

She found him, quarter of an hour afterwards, in the parlour, standing at the window, gazing out on the grey morning sky, from which the clouds were lazily dispersing, and on the mist-enveloped landscape below. The sombre aspect of nature did not seem to affect his spirits, however, for he was whistling a lively air, with many impromptu variations of his own, each indicating an exuberance of joy that proved infectious to all within its in fluence. On Mary's entrance he caught her in a playful embrace, saying with a laugh:

"You don't look as if you had been long in the 'land of Nod,' old woman. Look at me, as fresh as a daisy, and as merry as a cricket. But then, you see, virtue is its own reward: I did my duty this morning, Mary."

"Have you spoken to mother?" inquired his sister, with a kindling smile of pleasure as she met his glad eyes.

"To be sure, and made it all right with her. Now, have I not been a good boy?"

"I am happier than I can tell you; and I hope, Kenneth, there will never be any misunderstanding between us again."

"Not if I can help it. You know I like the sunshine, Mary."

"Then don't obscure it, Kenneth."

"As if I were a cloud! Oh, who can pay such compliments as sisters?"

"I should be sorry to pay you such a compliment, for clouds are inert, passive things, entirely at the disposal of every wind that blows, whether good or bad, while they have still the power to intercept the sunshine. Now, let me go, Kenneth; I must see after mother's breakfast."

"You need not go to her just now; I think Ronald is with her. Did you give him a lecture last night?"

Kenneth's face wore a look of mischievous glee as he asked this question, and Mary smiled as she answered: "Yes, I am not partial; he came in for his share, too."

"And did he threaten to lock you up?"

The answer to this question was intercepted by the entrance of the individual in question, whose countenance indicated that his interview with Mrs. Errol had been of a discomposing nature. He bade his brother and sister a curt "Good-morning," and rang rather sharply for the coffee. Betsy brought it in without delay, and they seated themselves at the table with rather an air of constraint.

Kenneth, however, on whom Ronald's morose moods had an effect similar to that exerted by dull

weather on certain buoyant temperaments, broke silence by asking cheerfully whether his brother would join the party proposed for the theatre that evening.

"You don't mean to say you intend going?" was the gruff response addressed to his sister.

Mary, who was pouring out the coffee, paused in the act, with a guilty blush, as she confessed she had thoughts of doing so.

"Then I would advise you in future to reserve your lectures on filial duty for your own consideration," was the sarcastic rejoinder.

"I shall not go without mother's consent," returned Mary, directing a look of appeal to Kenneth, who understood it perfectly, and hastened to her relief, saying: "If you don't choose to go yourself, Ronald, you need not try to dissuade Mary. Both you and I know very well she would be the last to oppose mother's wishes."

"You have a conveniently short memory," retorted Ronald, darting an angry look at his brother. "I think the episode of last night might have convinced you that another visit to the theatre, with Mary in your company, is hardly likely to be regarded as a proof of your willingness to consult her wishes."

"Things have changed since last night," began Kenneth; but Ronald interrupted him.

"Evidently," he sneered.

Kenneth flushed perceptibly, but, taking no notice of the taunt, continued: "And I am certain mother will not oppose our going to-night. She is less of a bigot in such matters than you are, Ronald."

"Thank you. Bigotry is the usual term applied by weak-minded people to those of a stronger mental calibre," retorted Ronald, with biting sarcasm in his tones, as he darted a withering look of scorn at his brother.

He was in an irritable frame of mind because of some words spoken to him that morning by his mother in regard to his duty towards Kenneth, whose great susceptibility to influence was urged as a reason why he should support Mrs. Errol and Mary in their efforts to shield him from Mr. Lesly's. In addition, however, to this, there was another reason for his acrimony. Mrs. Errol's partiality for her younger son was no secret to him, and he resented it as an injustice to himself, especially as, in whatever else he was to blame, he had never

failed in his devotion to his mother's interests, which he had done far more to promote than Kenneth. This sense of injustice naturally engendered jealousy, which might have resulted in more serious altercations, had it not been that Ronald himself shared in the general admiration of his handsome, engaging brother, whose former privileges seemed to entitle him to some indulgence, while conferring a certain prestige, of which, strange to say, none was prouder than Ronald himself. This feeling acted as an antidote to his jealousy, while it tended greatly to soften him towards Kenneth, the favoured son.

Whether Kenneth himself ever surmised the existence of such a sentiment on Ronald's part, or bore with his habitual roughness simply in virtue of his own amiable disposition, is uncertain; but he seldom retaliated with the anger one would have deemed natural when attacked as on the present occasion. This taunt, however, touching a point on which he was peculiarly sensitive, inasmuch as the weakness of his will was no secret to himself, caused the blood to mantle 10 his cheek and brow. He bit his lip nervously before he said in reply:

"Few are so highly favoured as yourself, Ronald, in strength of will; but strength never shows to less advantage than when it mocks at weakness. And perhaps the power of governing the will is even a rarer gift than the mere possession of a strong will itself."

Ronald did not seem disposed to prolong the discussion, for he hastily finished his breakfast, and set out to catch the morning coach to Lynnburgh.

When he was gone, Kenneth, with a sigh of relief, which was speedily followed by his own pleasant smile, turned to Mary and said:

"Well, we won't mourn the loss of his company to-night, Mary: what do you say?"

"I begin to think it very uncertain whether I can accompany you at all," she replied. "Why don't you break the ice for me, and win mother's consent, since you seem to prevail with her far more than I or anyone else?"

"Oh, I left that part of the business for you," he candidly confessed. "I thought it would be a pity to nullify the effect of my penitence by suggesting a new departure from her precepts."

"Then I am to bear the brunt of the storm, am I? Very gallant indeed, Kenneth! You know well how she detests everything connected with the

theatre; and when Ronald complies with her wishes in the matter, it seems unfair in me to thwart them. However, I won't recede from the promise I gave you last night, given you know on what conditions."

"Yes, yes, Mary; I know you will manage the affair," he said, rising and waving his napkin triumphantly; "and you will have an able advocate in Harry. Mother never can resist him at any time"

Mary suddenly recollected the visit which Kenneth had spoken of last night, and she was seized with new hesitation.

"Oh, I wish—" she began in evident perplexity.
"Why, you don't object to him, I suppose?" said her brother, with a significant smile that caused her to blush against her will.

Mary did not state her difficulty, whatever it was, for Betsy entered with a tray, saying her mistress would take some breakfast; and Kenneth prepared to go.

Before he went, however, he found occasion to say: "Never fear, Mary: you will come off victorious. And when you have seen Beatrice, you won't require much pressing to pay another visit. You don't know what a treat you have in store. Good-morning, ma belle Marie. This afternoon, remember."

Gaily waving his hand, as if in assurance that the matter would end satisfactorily, he went away, leaving Mary to the contemplations of her arduous task.

Arduous it promised to be, for Mrs. Errol had a rooted aversion to the stage. Once, formerly, when the subject had been accidentally introduced, a discussion had taken place between that lady and Mr. Dunbar, who, much to Mary's surprise, ventured to express regret that all efforts to purify the stage had been futile; because, under proper management, the drama might serve a desirable end by providing an elevating and rational amusement, and thus acting as an auxiliary to higher agencies for man's well-being. He had also professed an enthusiastic admiration for the dramas of William Shakespeare. The effect of this discussion had been such as to prevent any renewal of it, for Mrs. Errol warmly maintained that the institution was detrimental in its very nature to the best interests of society, and could never be otherwise. But Mary retained so vivid an impression of it, that she

proceeded to ransack an old bookcase, on the highest shelf of which she discovered a musty volume containing these same mysterious compositions of which Mr. Dunbar had spoken in terms of such genuine admiration. The book had belonged to her father, whose name was inscribed in his own hand on the fly-leaf; a circumstance which alone seemed to warrant a perusal. Accordingly, in leisure hours, she took it up, and devoured its contents, her admiration increasing with every step, as she passed through that wondrous picture gallery, in which every phase of human life, and every varied experience, is exhibited with a faithfulness almost superhuman. Naturally enough there arose in her mind a desire to witness these enchanting poems in living action; for if they proved so fascinating in the reading, what must their representation be? Her mother's antipathy to such a thing, however, checked the wish in the bud, and she had relinquished it once for all. Now, however, although that desire had ceased to be felt, there seemed a probability that it was to be gratified; for despite her objection to the stage, Mary was tempted to think that her mother would consent to her going to-night when she heard what her motive

She waited until Mrs. Errol came downstairs before broaching the subject: and that lady was just beginning to recover from her amazement, when there was a clatter of hoofs outside, and Harry Douglas dismounted at the gate. His unexpected appearance, of which Mary had not had time to apprise her mother, still further augmented her astonishment, and her face wore a bewildered, troubled expression when the young man stepped into the room.

The cloud resting on Mrs. Errol's face slowly vanished under the sunshine of his. It was a face to charm away sadness. Mirth seemed to sparkle in the saucy brown eyes, and to lurk among the ringlets of his brown curly hair; and mirth seemed to hover round the full red lips, whose smile no one could ever resist. The aristocratic features might, and did, attract notice wherever he appeared; but so soon as that captivating smile, bright as morning sunlight, broke over his face, the most obdurate heart was won. And the frank, winsome manners were to many as irresistible as the charms of his face, endearing him to all, from the child he patted on the head as he passed, to the old man

he gave a coin to. In fact, everybody loved bright, merry Harry Douglas. There was something in the elastic spring of his step that indicated a glad and buoyant spirit; a very sunshine seemed to invest his presence, affecting all with whom he came in contact.

No wonder Mrs. Errol's displeasure melted like ice beneath his bright glances, and gave place to undisguised admiration as she surveyed his handsome form. There was a roguish twinkle in his eyes as he exchanged greetings with her, as if he knew what had been the subject of conversation before he came in, and was prepared to address himself to the formidable encounter. He even appeared to anticipate it with pleasure, glancing at Mrs. Errol's puzzled face in a sort of boyish mischievousness, that might have suggested to her that he was meditating some plot of which she was to be the victim. Moreover, the conscious look Mary wore plainly indicated complicity in that plot, whatever it might be; but Mrs. Errol attributed this to another cause, and kept glancing at the visitor in expectation that he would explain what had brought him to the cottage.

This he proceeded to do, with his customary ease and frankness, as he took a seat beside Mrs. Errol, and laid his riding-whip on the table. This implement accompanied him everywhere: only decency prevented him from taking it with him to church. He had usually one or two dogs in his train, but regard for the safety of Mrs. Errol's cat had constrained him to leave them at home on this occasion.

"I have taken you by surprise, I see, Mrs. Errol," he said, "and I fear you will be more surprised when you hear my errand. The fact is, I have come to ask a very great favour, and one which I'm sure you won't have the heart to refuse. My father and mother, and all of us, are going to see the play to-night, and they have sent me to request you to let Mary go with us. Now, don't look so grave, as if I were asking her to accompany me to the lower regions."

"'Deed, sir, I think there's very little difference," said Mrs. Errol, unable to suppress a smile at the same time, as she saw the merry twinkle in his eyes. "It's my opinion the Deevil mak's the theatre his nearest steppin' stane. Na, na, Mr. Harry, dinna try to beguile me into giein' my consent to sic a thing. Theatres are neither gude for soul nor body;

and ye're no blate to ask me, a minister's dochter, to sanction them. Gang awa, sir; I aye thocht ye had mair sense."

"Well, but this visit to-night may convince us all of the evil of the thing, and bring us quite to your way of thinking. At least you can't object to our seeing for ourselves what it is. Surely you must be speaking from experience when you declare so unhesitatingly against it. Now, confess," he pursued, noticing a tacit admission of the charge in the sudden change of countenance caused by these last words, "you have been yourself to the play, have you not?"

"Weel, wi' shame I own that I have," replied Mrs. Errol, a blush of conscious guilt stealing over her face as she confessed to this flagrant transgression. "My husband was fond o' that kind o' thing, and to please him I went once or twice. But that's nae reason why you should mak' my weakness an excuse for followin' my example."

"By no means; we mean to profit by your example," rejoined Harry, gaining fresh confidence at every step, and betraying unbounded delight at every advantage he won. "For, you see, it was by going to the play that you saw its evils, and that is precisely what we mean to do. Now, isn't that good logic?"

"'Deed, sir, I think it's the Deevil's logic; and I doot ye're mair likely to be ensnared by that vain allurements than get ony distaste to them. Young folks canna see below the surface, and the ootside glitter flings a glamour ower their een—ay, and in mair things than stage plays. Ye're laughin', young sir; but it's true, and, if ye would but tak' the warnin' o' an auld woman, wha has seen mair o' the world than maybe yon'll ever see, ye micht save yourself frae mony a sorrow to come. The lovely things arena aye the leal things, and the gold doesna lie on the surface."

Harry's roguish smile gave place to a look of admiration as he watched Mrs. Errol's kindling face. It had been a fair face once; and although there were furrows on the high, open brow, and the hair that shaded it was silver-white, the traces of beauty still lingered in the clear dark eyes and regular features. That same look inspiring confidence, which was reproduced so strikingly in Mary's face, distinguished hers. But in her eyes there shone a more piercing lustre than ever lighted Mary's, while the firm-set lips betokened

greater strength of will. There was something commanding, too, in her mien, enhanced by her tall, queenly figure and stately step, with which, however, the extreme simplicity of her dress was in striking contrast. This consisted of a plain black gown, of some soft stuff, which draped her figure with the graceful ease noticeable in classical figures, and the pattern of which never varied. Across her chest she wore a piece of white crape, arranged in neat folds, and always spotlessly pure. Her widow's cap sat upon her head with a sort of regal grace. Even in the black lace mittens on her hands there was a nameless elegance that proclaimed the lady, notwithstanding that the hands themselves bore unmistakable traces of hard, laborious toil. In short, her appearance was such as to arrest attention anywhere. Some might fear (those, at least, who had cause to fear), but all must respect Mrs. Errol.

None more than blithe Harry himself, whose courage had begun to wane under the influence of her last words. Indeed, he would probably have desisted altogether from further urging his plea had not a glance at Mary's face renewed his ardour.

"I'm sure, Mrs. Errol," he resumed, "we'll all be proof against the glamour, after listening to these wise words of yours. But won't you consent to let us try the experiment just for once? Now, won't you, Mrs. Errol? Remember your own young days, when even you were a little giddy; for no one so bonny could help being giddy, you know—and relent just this once. Do, for my sake, Mrs. Errol; and I promise, if you have cause to regret the indulgence, never to repeat my request. Could anything be fairer than that? I'm ready to go down on my knees."

He was about to make good his word, when Mrs. Errol prevented him by rising from her chair. "Eh, laddie," said she, "ye hae a winsome tongue, when e'en an auld body like me find it sae hard to say ye nay, though I would fain see ye exercise it in a better cause. Weel, gin ye're set on't, I maun leave you and Mary to settle the matter between yoursel's. Ye ken my persuasion."

So saying she left the room, shaking her head gravely at Harry, who launched at her a glance of gleeful triumph as he opened the door for her to pass out, and promised the most extravagant rewards for this unspeakable boon.

But when he turned to Mary his manner under-

went a marked change, the mischievous playfulness giving place to a certain coyness and diffidence quite extraordinary in one who was generally so much at his ease.

"Have I not reason to be proud of such a victory?" he asked.

"You may congratulate yourself," said Mary. "I don't know of anyone else who could have extorted such an indulgence from mother. I thank you for taking such trouble on my behoof, though, to be candid, my inclination runs counter to the project altogether; indeed, it is wholly on Kenneth's account that I have consented to join the party to-night."

A shade of disappointment crossed Harry's face. Mary saw it, and, mistaking its cause, hastened to assure him of her true appreciation of his kindness. The warmth with which she spoke restored him to cheerfulness, and he proceeded to enlarge on the wonderful gifts of the actress whose performances were nightly electrifying the people of Lynnburgh.

Mary acknowledged that, while she endorsed her mother's views touching the stage, she had formerly been anxious to see one of Shakespeare's plays performed.

"Then you will be gratified to-night," rejoined Harry, with great fervour, "for they are going to play one of Shakespeare's tragedies."

"Do you know which it is?" asked Mary.

"'King Lear,'" he replied, brightening as he observed the start of glad surprise occasioned by his words. "You seem pleased with the prospect," he added.

"That has always been my favourite," she answered; "and it seems strange that it should happen to be the one I am to see performed on the stage. I suppose you are all going to-night?"

"All except Stephen; he, of course, can never be persuaded to go into society at all. Poor fellow! his promises to be a lonely life."

He sighed as he said this, and Mary thought he had never looked so handsome. The feeling must have betrayed itself in her face, for, meeting her gaze, he blushed slightly, and there shone a light in his eye whose meaning she for the first time divined with a strange mingling of pain and surprise. In a moment, as by a revelation, she saw the significance of much that had hitherto passed unheeded in his conduct toward herself. It

all wore a new aspect now, and filled her with genuine contrition for having been so heedlessly blind, Blind, indeed, she must have been, when others had seen evidences of his partiality for her. And yet, so little prone was she to imagine that anyone could estimate her at more than her own valuation, that the idea of Harry Douglas admiring her had never once entered her mind. The discovery, made at this moment, brought with it a flood of reproachful thoughts, amid which she felt herself so great a culprit, that she dared not look at his true, frank face, whose mute eloquence might have touched a less tender heart than hers. Yet, on the other hand, it was equally impossible to betray her feelings. In secret distress as to how she should escape from her embarrassment, she made a desperate effort at saying something, then rose to leave the room on some pretext.

But ere she reached the door, he intercepted her, and seizing her hand with passionate fervour, pronounced her name in tones whose meaning could not be mistaken.

She looked at his glowing face with mingled ear and pain; but before he could utter the burning words on his tongue, a clear ringing laugh was heard in the passage outside, and Betsy announced Miss Jessy Douglas, who came dancing into the room, and seized Mary in her arms. Then, glancing merrily at her brother, on whose cheek and brow a flush still lingered, she inquired the success of his mission.

Harry was nervously switching his boots with the riding-whip, and seemed eager to be gone. He merely said Mrs. Errol had given her consent, and that he hoped Mary would be one of the party that night; but he would leave Jessy to unite her entreaties to his. And with these words he abruptly departed.

At the door he encountered another visitor, in the person of Raymond Dunbar, who seemed only less flurried than himself. Their greeting was somewhat constrained, for at this moment each somehow betrayed a consciousness of being rivals. Raymond's dark eyes read in Harry's flushed face indications of the same feelings that filled his own breast; while Harry instantly perceived that he was under suspicion of entertaining such feelings, and began for the first time in his life to fear his old friend. Had he known what business brought him there that morning, his greeting would have

been even less cordial than it was; but this encounter decided him to lose no more time in pressing his suit. Poor fellow, had he been less sanguine, he might have seen something in Raymond's face to convince him he was already too late. As it was, he watched him enter the cottage with grave apprehension, and resolved to seize the opportunity this night would afford him of speaking to Mary Errol the words which had been on his lips when the untimely entrance of his sister prevented their utterance.

CHAPTER XIV.

"CORDELIA."

THAT was destined to be a most disquieting day for poor Mary. Indeed, she began to think it only the prelude to vet more exciting days. In the first place, she had incurred her brother Ronald's displeasure, the effects of which she was sure to feel in a yet more painful degree, for Ronald visited any opposition with rigid severity. In the second place, she found herself on the brink of a painful estrangement from Harry Douglas, whose friendship had done much to brighten, not only her own life, but also the lives of every inmate of the cottage. But, worst of all, she found herself compelled, both in virtue of the promise given to Kenneth, and also because of Jessy's importunity, based on the united wishes of her family, to join in a project distasteful in itself, but specially so from its entailing companionship with the very person she most wished to avoid—Harry Douglas.

Then, as if that were not enough, she found Raymond strongly averse to the whole proceeding. He had communicated his suspicion as to the reason of Harry being with her that morning, and she had been obliged to tell him something of what had transpired between them. Very naturally he disapproved of her being again in his company, and his evident pain caused her bitterly to regret her weakness in yielding to Kenneth's request. She could only assure him the prospect of that night's engagement was fraught with as much pain to her as it could be to him, and that, under no circumstances, would she ever allow herself to be placed in so embarrassing a situation again.

Raymond seemed grateful for the assurance; and the successful issue of his interview with Mrs. Errol, which lasted long enough to make Mary

nervous, had yet greater effect in restoring him to cheerfulness. When it was over, he and Mary had a long ramble by the shore, discussing their plans for the future, and indulging in those rose-coloured visions which have made the paradise of lovers from time immemorial. Then they parted, Raymond to announce the good news to his father, to whom he well knew it would be more of a pleasure than a surprise; Mary to receive her mother's congratulations and blessing, or rather to throw herself into that mother's arms and have a "good greet."

Betsy's congratulations, however, forestalled even Mrs. Errol's, for she met her young mistress at the door, and overwhelmed her with hugs and "My certy!" she exclaimed, briskly whisking her apron across her face to conceal a gathering tear or two, "I'm the prood wuman this day! To think I sud leeve to see my ain bairn mairried, an' to sae braw an' gude a gentleman! I'm sae unco pleased, I declare I could maist greet. Eh, sirs! wha wad think it's as lang syne I dandled ye in my arms? Weel, weel, this mak's me an auld wuman, Miss Mary; but auld or no, I'm jist as canty the day as if I was gaun to be mairried mysel'. There's no a blessin' for this warld or the next that I dinna wish ye, my ain gude bairn."

With these words the faithful old woman gave Mary another warm embrace, then whisked her apron once more over her face, and retired hastily to the kitchen.

Mary seemed to be walking in a dream all that day, until the afternoon came on, when the recollection of the visit to the theatre proved efficacious in arousing her. Do as she would, she could not shake off an almost superstitious feeling that evil was somehow associated with this night's proceeding. Even while Betsy was bustling about her room, looking out such attire as seemed suitable for the occasion, and Mrs. Errol brought a necklace of Scotch pearls-the only surviving relic of her better days which the straits of poverty had allowed her to keep, as it was her first gift from her dead husband, whose own hands had clasped it round her neck-and presented it to her to wear, the dismal feeling of foreboding continued to haunt her, making the prospect more and more unwelcome as it drew nearer. The mute dissatisfaction portrayed on her mother's face could hardly augment her own; and it required all the painful memories associated with Mr. Lesly to fortify her against retracting her promise.

Betsy did not fail to notice these symptoms of uneasiness in her young mistress, and during Mrs. Errol's absence from the room she proceeded to admonish her in her own fashion.

"Losh, Miss Mary," she exclaimed, while she briskly threw over her mistress's head that same grey silk dress which had last seen the light on the occasion of the harvest-home, "I won'er to see ye sae dowie. My fegs! ye're no like me. When I was a lassie, the vera ootside o' a theatre set me in a low, let alane the inside o't. An' although mony a braw flytin' I got frae my faither, I couldna bide awa' gin I had a chance o' seein' a play. An', certies, I ne'er could see ony ill in't, for a' the fash they mak' aboot it. I'm suir, aukl Maister Croker, oor minister at Muircleugh, mony a time roared himsel' hoarse wi' denouncin' a' that wad parteecipate wi' publicans an' sinners, as he ca'd the play-actors, wham he consigned ram-stam to perdection. But I'm thinkin' they're no muckle waur than a heap o' them that misca' them; an' if their conscience alloos them to mak' their breed by exhibitin' themsel's afore folk, I canna see that we hae onything to dae wi't. Hoots! Miss Mary," she concluded, seeing her mistress smiling at these words, "it's high time ye had something to brisk ye up a wee, for ye dae naething but rin after other folk's unweel weans; ye ne'er tak' ony diversion ava; it's no for ony young lassie. An', take my word for't, ye'll come hame a hantle lot cheerier for seein' the play. 'Deed, I'm no suir but ye'll be fain to see mair. Oh, dinna shake yer heed sae sedately; I ken what young bluid's made o', an' a wee thing gars it loup, like a burn that's been keppit for a wee wi' the stanes."

Thus the old woman chattered on, until the toilet was completed, when she brought the passive figure she had been adorning to survey itself in the mirror. But Mary hardly paused for a look, much to Betsy's mortification, who declared she was in low spirits because she had been living too long on love, and accordingly hastened downstairs for a cup of tea, her unfailing remedy for all disorders.

Mary seated herself by the window to wait for Kenneth's appearance. Nor had she to wait long, for presently he came rushing into the house, and bounded upstairs to her room, bringing with him a superb bouquet of flowers, which he had intercepted on its way from the Castle.

Leaving it for her admiration, he hastened to complete his own toilet, which occupied longer time than usual that evening.

When at last he made his appearance, in that becoming dress not yet discarded at court, Mary's eye rested on him with all a sister's fond pride. He noticed the look, and smiled in return, with a sort of playful vanity irresistibly charming, then, with a courtly bow, he offered his arm to escort her downstairs.

Mrs. Errol was waiting below, and anxiously enquired of her daughter if she had provided herself with warm enough wraps against the chillness of the evening. As if to make sure of this, she proceeded to adjust the shawl on Mary's shoulders, surveying her the while with a kindly scrutiny which indicated some anxiety that she should look her best.

"Why don't you examine me, mother?" said Kenneth, drawing himself up to his full height, and darting a mischievous look at his mother as she strove to conceal her admiration for her handsome boy.

"You're vain enough without my lookin' at ye," retorted she, pretending to busy herself about Mary's dress; then added, "See that ye bring your sister hame as sune as possible; I'm ill at ease aboot this night. I hope it's the last time ye'll frequent the theatre, Kenneth."

"Oh, we'll see about that, mother," was his gay rejoinder, as he opened the door to lead Mary out. "You know Shakespeare says, 'Youth must needs have dalliance,' and you were young yourself, mother, once. But you may be sure I'll bring Mary safe home. Come, Mary, we must go. The chaise is just at the foot of the hill. Good-night, mother; keep your mind easy, and don't sit up."

"I'll no be sleeping, anyway, when ye come back," she replied. "I wish ye were baith safe hame."

Betsy looked out from the kitchen as they passed, and joined her mistress on the doorstep to watch their departure.

Mary came running back for a moment, saying: "Don't be anxious about us, mother. Perhaps my going may do good."

"Maybe, Mary. But run; I hear your brother callin' for you."

She obeyed the summons, and Mrs. Errol turned into the house, scarcely hearing Betsy's remark: "She's a gude lassie; but, eh! isna he the braw lad!"

Meanwhile the brother and sister were driving along at a brisk pace towards their destination.

"It was good in you to come to-night," said Kenneth, passing his arm for an instant round Mary's waist; "and I'm sure you won't regret it."

"I hope not," she answered, fervently.

"I am certain you won't," he reiterated. "Do you know what play you are to see to night?" he asked, with animation.

"Yes; Harry Douglas told me it was 'King Lear,'" she answered.

"And didn't you once tell me it was your favourite play?"

"I admire it more than any of the others."

"Ah! but you have to see Beatrice in it to know what a magnificent tragedy it is! You can't even imagine what it's like, Mary. I should like to see your face when the scene opens! Won't it surprise you!"

He laughed, shook the reins, and quickened the horse's speed, evidently impatient to be at his journey's end.

Soon the cheerful lights from the Castle windows twinkled among the trees, and grew brighter every moment, until they lost sight of them as they turned a corner of the avenue.

Jessy was the first to receive them, and she would hardly wait until her mother had greeted the guests, in her impatience to carry off Mary.

"Do come, Mary!" she exclaimed. "Ada is expecting you. She declared she would not believe you would go with us until you actually came. She does look pretty to-night. Come and see her. Never mind your wraps, Mary; I'll take them till Jenny has finished dressing Ada. Here we are."

Throwing open the door of a room they had come to, Jessy revealed to her friend a perfect vision of beauty.

Standing before a pier-glass, her head slightly drooping to allow her maid to fasten a pearl spray among the golden tresses of her rippling hair, appeared the baronet's daughter. She wore a dress of white satin, that lay in gleaming folds around her. It parted in front, revealing an underskirt of pale pink interlaced with silver. Finest lace veiled

the whiteness of her bosom, and floated like a mist about her arms. Milk-white pearls nestled on her breast, and encircled her neck and arms and waist. But Mary took but a passing survey of these details; all her attention was absorbed by the surpassing loveliness of the face, which to-night was lit by a strange radiance, almost too bright for a denizen of this perishing world. It made her sad, she could not tell why; and, as she pressed a kiss on the fair face, there was a grave tenderness in the caress that almost alarmed poor Ada, who, however, attributed it to Mary's scruples about that evening's proceedings, and turned gaily to the mirror to complete her toilet.

When it was finished, they all went downstairs to a cosy sitting-room, opening from the diningroom, in which all the family were gathered.

During dinner the predominant theme of conversation was the theatre, and the respective talents of the company then occupying it. Kenneth and Harry became eloquent in describing the performances they had already witnessed, dilating especially on the marvellous gifts of the great actress, who was fast rising to the zenith of her fame.

"Well, if she justifies all the praise you young men have lavished on her," commented Sir Edward, "we should have very excellent entertainment to-night. And now, if you will excuse my interrupting you, I should recommend the ladies to get ready."

The hint was immediately taken, and presently they gathered in the hall; while Harry went to investigate the horses and all the details of their harness, to ensure speed and safety on their journey. He rode his own spirited chestnut, and had put at Kenneth's disposal a more docile animal, on which he had had many a canter before. The large, roomy conveyance, which only did duty on special occasions, afforded accommodation enough for the other members of the party. And when all was ready, they set off on their ride to Lynnburgh.

The night was somewhat stormy, and the gusts of wind occasionally dashed rain against the windows of the coach; but, fortunately, the moon was risen, and threw its light down between rifts in the clouds, revealing glimpses of the quiet valley through which they drove.

By-and-bye the lights of Lynnburgh began to glimmer in the distance.

At the inn, near the entrance of the town, Harry and his companion dismounted, and gave their horses in charge to an ostler. They found it no difficult matter to keep pace with the carriage, whose progress through the narrow, blocked street was but slow. And when they came to the theatre, the surging mob around it compelled them to stop, until some officials, recognising Sir Edward's coach, made an opening for it through the dense mass of people, who had besieged the building to the very door.

Alighting there with some difficulty, they dismissed the carriage, and followed Harry, who piloted them up narrow winding staircases, along several dimly lighted corridors, until they emerged on a scene whose brilliancy fairly dazzled the unvitiated eyes of Mary Errol.

(To be continued.)

SHADOW-MUSIC.

I hear a voice thro' the autumn woods, In the golden haze of noon, A dreamy murmur of melody, To a half-forgotten tune. To it the song of the sunbeams, sliding

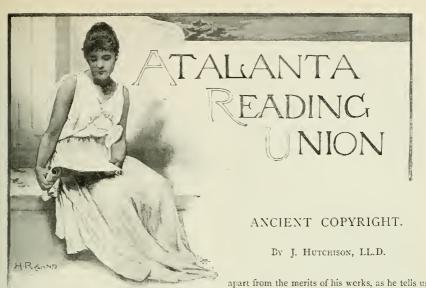
Down the stems of the stately trees.
Or the sigh of the brown leaves, graveward gl

Or the sigh of the brown leaves, graveward gliding, Borne on the restless breeze.

Far—like a voice from the stars, sad-gazing Over a weary world of strife. Near—like the plaint of the dying insects, Mourning their short, sweet life. Still thro' the twilight's purple shades
Rings on the ethereal strain;
Sad—with a subtle gladness,
Glad—with a note of pain.

'Tis but the shadow-music of thought,
The sigh of a buried ill,
The happy laugh of a faded joy
That faintly echoes still.
'Tis but the zephyr touch of memory,
On the Æolian strings of the past,
Only the discords time has mellowed
To harmony at last.

C. JELF-SHARP.



I N the "Curiosities of Literature" one of the chapters is devoted to the consideration of the "poverty of the learned," and Disraeli has no difficulty in finding examples to establish the position that fortune has rarely smiled upon the man of letters. The only English examples he gives are Spenser and Dryden; the rest are mainly mediæval geniuses, whom their countrymen left to languish in poverty while living, but whose works are now the glory of their respective countries. Had Disraeli carried his researches further back. he would have found that neither in antiquity was devotion to literature a paying concern. modern times, as soon as literature got beyond the patronage of the great for its support, real literary merit found little difficulty in maintaining itself by the mere width of the constituency to which appeal might be made; and in recent times, to say nothing of publishers' profits, considerable fortunes have been made by authors who have hit upon popular veins of literary work. When an author gets a hold of the public, such as that of Scott or Macaulay-the demand for whose works, his biographer tells us, varies only with the demand for coal-or Anthony Trollope, whose mere name, apart from the merits of his works, as he tells us himself, sold these works in his later years—when this happens with a decent system of copyright, a man may fairly reckon upon making a good deal more than his daily bread. The object of the present paper is to show that the literary man of antiquity disposed of the fruits of his genius under conditions that nearly denied the existence of literary property, and consequently gave a man small chance of living off his works, however ingenious or popular these works might be.

Copyright and literary property represent conceptions that are mainly the outcome of the invention of printing. There is no hint of the existence of the one or the other within the four corners of that immense legal encyclopædia, the "Corpus Juris." There is, to be sure, a law dealing with plagiarists, but in this law the word does not refer to literary pilferers, but to people who stole free-born children and sold them as slaves.

But if an ancient author suffered from plagiarism, he suffered more from the conditions under which ancient books were produced. By printing, the multiplication of copies can be effected with ease and cheapness, although we are not so much in advance of antiquity in these respects as is commonly supposed. If the ancients had not the printing press, they had abundance of cheap, because slave labour and a plentiful supply of books was

one of the beneficent results of the system of ancient slavery. At Rome considerable establishments were kept for reproducing books. Each copy was written out with the hand, a superior slave dictating to more or fewer subordinates. For a slave who was a clever and neat-handed copyist-such were mostly Greeks-a purchaser would pay as much as eighty pounds. The result of the system was, that in the early Empire, at all events, books could be multiplied to any extent with surprising rapidity, and at a marvellously small cost. Calculations have been made which show that a limited number of copies (say one hundred) could be more precisely written off in the way described than a single one would be set up by a printer. A book of Martial containing five hundred and forty lines, could be produced in an hour. It, no doubt, contained less matter than a new volume by Tennyson or Browning, but an elaborately bound copy was sold for about a half, while plainer ones were sold for a fourth, or even a twentieth part of the price of a new volume by these popular British authors. There is evidence also that popular books had at times a considerable circulation as well in the provinces as in the capital. The surprising thing is, that under such conditions the conceptions of literary property did not arise, or that such traces of its existence as we see did not find expression in any law. No doubt there is evidence that in the early days of our era one author could sell his manuscripts to a publisher, just as in earlier times a play-writer, like Plautus or Terence, could sell his plays to the magistrate, whose duty it was to cater for the public amusement. But once published, there was no law to prevent indefinite multiplication of copies by any one who chose to reproduce the book. In the production of books there was unlimited free trade. When a man bought a book it was his property both outside and in. He could use it for any purpose he pleased. He could plagiarise from it, subject to the penalty of ridicule if detected; or he could reproduce it to any extent he chose, and sell it for gain, no law preventing him. The system of advertising forthcoming works by large posters at the bookbinder's doors was the principal one practised in ancient Rome. But the most recent researches of scholars on the subject seem to show that all the advantage a publisher could derive from the issue of a new book was confined to the profit that could be made on the sale of as many copies as could be disposed of before the perfectly legal process of repro-

duction by rival establishments should commence. The process, as we have seen, was a very simple one. and as reproducers were under no obligation to an author, it is clear that his hope of making a living off his books was small. At the same time, such firms as that of Sosii Brothers, who issued the works of Horace and Virgil, or that of Tryphon or Atrectus, who published Martial and Seneca, had smaller risks than the great publishing houses of modern times. They required less plant; they could better control the proportion between the extent of an issue and the public demand; and while some surplus copies then, as now, found their way as waste-paper to the shops of the retail tradesmen, the material could be used over again as palimpsest for the reproduction of new works. All that the publisher risked was the cost of copying. Doubtless, too, then, as now, all books were not popular. In a highly luxurious age, when there was just a rage for authorship, the vast majority of books must have been of a quality that would excite no competition among rival houses; and we may be quite sure that Greek and Roman publishers were as shrewd as their modern successors in protecting themselves against people who would insist upon being authors, but whose work the public would not buy. Aspiring authors must have paid the cost of their own productions, and were probably a source of profit to their publishers besides.

Greek and Roman authors, meanwhile, like authors in all ages, had varied fortunes. Many of the great names that have come down to us are known to have had means of living independently of what their literary works could produce. In the absence of profit from their works many of them had good patrons; grateful cities and communities enriched others. Some were not without a keen eye to the main chance, and sold their works profitably; others squandered prodigally what patrons or success sent them, and lived a life alternating between plenty and poverty. The fortune that tradition assigns to Homer was, perhaps, no uncommon one for all the early bards, who sang simply because, like the birds, it was their nature to do so. In the great days of Greece men produced immortal works when glory was the main or only prize, although substantial benefits sometimes, as in the case of Pindar, accompanied the glory. Simonides is the first who is known to have composed his works with a keen eye to

business, and yet he lived in what was perhaps the most spirit-stirring age of Greek history. He was a contemporary of Eschylus, and died in the year in which Socrates was born. "He kept two pockets," he used to say; "the one for presents and thanks, the other for pay. The former he found always empty; the latter, full." Bayle takes the saying to mean that, finding the presents to be insufficient reward for his work, he had been led to fix a price for his verses; and no poet, it is said, ever surpassed him in the art of making rich. The philosophers can hardly be said to have sold their works, or even to have taught, for pay, although Plato paid £,350 for three books of a Pythagorean philosopher; but it is thought that it was the original manuscript, and not a sale copy, for which he paid this sum. Epicurus published three hundred volumes in his lifetime.

Princes, Greek and foreign, felt their courts honoured by the sojourn at them of distinguished poets and philosophers, although the hospitality afforded them, occasionally for an entire lifetime, was in some cases accompanied by humiliating conditions. The democracies, too, did not like it. If Menander accepted the patronage of Demetrius of Phaleron, the Athenians had their revenge by steadily voting the prizes to his rival, Philemon. The same democracy, however, in its better days, had also its generous moods. It gave Herodotus ten talents (£,2,500) for the honourable mention the historian gave the city in his history recited before assembled Greece. Isocrates, the Athenian, better known as a successful educator and political essayist than as an advocate, got twenty talents (£,5,000) from a prince of Cyprus for a volume of essays which he had sent him. These were doubtless the favourites of fortune.

At Rome, such literature as the first five centuries produced was mainly a part of a political religion. When Rome began to have a real literature, it was under the patronage of enlightened patricians that it flourished. Still Plautus made a fortune by the stage; he lost it, and even became a slave for debt. But he regained his freedom, and as he made a new fortune, we may perhaps safely argue that he must have been well paid for his comedies, which were highly popular. Terence got as much as £80 for a play—a sum which, Suetonius tells us, was not paid for a play again for more than two hundred years. The comedian, moreover, must have retained the property of his plays, for

we find that Terence sold one to the ædile a second and even a third time. Cicero had also another publisher, called Dorus, who was likewise the publisher of Livy. Seneca has a short passage giving us a glimpse into the relations between authors and their publishers, from which it appears that the publisher became proprietor of the books which he bought, his publication of them, however, being always liable to the competition described above. "We speak," says Seneca, "of the works of Cicero, but Dorus, the bookseller, says that they also belong to him. Both propositions are equally true; the one claims the books as author, the other as publisher. They belong to both under different titles; and Livy can even buy his own books from Dorus," Even in the Augustan age it is probable that the sale of books brought little profit to their authors. Even then Virgil was used as a school-book, and must have had a large sale; but there is probably truth in the statement of Juvenal, in the famous satire in which he sets forth the woful state of all branches of literature in his day, that had it not been for the patronage of Mæcenas, Virgil's genius would have remained unnoticed. As a teacher of his luxurious age, one of the poet's messages certainly was that life could be well spent independently of wealth. He himself wrote with no hope of pecuniary reward; his greatest work was not published till after his death. But if he got little or nothing from the booksellers he made well by poetry from his imperial patrons. Their support relieved him from pecuniary cares and left him free to indulge his genius; and for a famous passage in the sixth book-the passage contains thirty-two lines-he got £,100 a line from Octavia, the mother of the short-lived prince whom he so skilfully introduced into the poem. In the first century of our era, notwithstanding the easy spread of books and the existence of a reading-class, authors were either wealthy like Lucian, Tacitus, the Senecas, Quintilian, and the two Plinys, and wrote for writing's sake, or they were poor and patronised, and glad sometimes to get a coat, like Martial, or a meal, like Statius. No author lived by his books. They could sell them to the booksellers; but the absence of all further right of literary property, either for author or publisher, was a distinct disadvantage to the literary class in antiquity, when compared with the corresponding class in modern times.

THE ATALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

Subject for January—"Is the higher education of Women injurious to the home-life?" Pap rs not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before January 25th. The best paper on either side will be published in the magazine.

READING UNION AND SCHOOL OF FICTION.

Give an estimate of the character of Rosalind in As You Like It, Write an Ode on the New Year, not exceeding 20 lines. Describe a scene of violent recrimination between two people, emphasising characters by dialogue. (Members can only enter for one of these subjects. Essays not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before January 25th.)

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (DECEMBER).

1. The Nucta or Miraculous Drop, falling in Egypt precisely on St. John's Day, in June, is supposed to have the effect of stopping the plagne. See Lalla Rookh.

2. A Lady of Provence. Mrs. Hemans.

1. Wordsworth, 2. Byron. 3. Coleridge. Wallenstein-4. Shelley.

III.

1. Thomas Hood to II. Bodkin, Esq.

2. Sir Walter Scott. "Songs of Meg Merrilies," in Guy Mannering.

t. Lady Isabel and Robert Bruce. 2. The Lord of the Isles. Scott.

1. Thos, Woolston was an impious madman, who wrote against the miracles of the Gospel in 1726. 2. In the Dunciad. 3. Pope. VI.

Ophelia.

1. Princess. 2. Maud. Tennyson.

Brian Newcome, in The Newcomes. Thackeray.

SEARCH QUESTIONS (JANUARY).

1.

Give author of the following quotations:-

"Follow out the happiest story, It closes with the tomb.'

"Love is like the wild rose-briar, Friendship like the holly tree. The holly is dark when the rose-briar blooms, But which will bloom most constantly?

"Of its own beauty is the mind diseased, And fevers into false creation-where, Where, are the charms the sculptor's soul hath seized? In him alone. Can nature show so fair?

1. By whom was the play Aureng Zebe written?

2. In what year and to whom was it addressed?

Who wrote the following Elegy?-

"He taught us how to live; and, oh! too high The price of knowledge taught us how to die."

2. Of whom was it written. 3. What incident does it refer to?

Give authors of the following quotations :-

"When shall they meet? I cannot tell, Indeed, when they shall meet again, Except some day in Paradise; For this they wait, one waits in pain;

Beyond the sea of death love lies For ever, yesterday, to-day; Angels shall ask, 'Is it well?' And they shall answer 'Yea.'"

"Known and unknown, human, divine, Sweet human hand and lips and eye. Dear heavenly friend that canst not die, Mine, mine, for ever mine."

"The western tide crept up along the sand, And o'er and o'er the sand, And round and round the sand, As far as eye could see."

"By those that deepest feel is all exprest The indistinctness of the suffering breast: Where thousand thoughts begin to end in one. Which seeks from all the refuge found in none. No words suffice the secret soul to show, And Truth denies all eloquence to Woe."

1. Who was the real author of the old ballad, Sir Patrick Spens? 2. Give two reputed authors of the two versions of the Flowers of the Forest.

What character in history is this?-

1. "A woman fair to look upon, when well rouged; she, borne on palanquin shoulder-high; with red woollen nightcap; in azure mantle; garlanded with oak.

2. Give author and work.



"THE EMPTY CHAIR."
(By permission of the Berlin Photographic Co.)

[BRITON RIVIERE, pinxt.

Engraved by the Art Reproduction Co.]



By MRS. HUNGERFORD,

Author of "Molly Bawn," "Phyllis," "The Hoyden," &c.

CHAPTER XVI.

"The red rose cries, 'She is near, she is near';
The white rose weeps, 'She is late';
The larkspur listens, 'I hear, I hear';
And the lily whispers, 'I wait.'"

To-MORROW has come, and has gone through its happy christening. Its new name, "To-day," seems to sit lightly on its shoulders, and even now, "at shut of evening flowers," as its fresh youth declines, and night comes on apace, and with it the knowledge that soon it must put off its mature glories, and consent to be christened again—it still seems full of life and gaiety.

The old gardens of "The Court" are full of life, too. Young forms are flitting to and fro amongst the roses, and the flowering shrubs. The Squire is still away, not to be expected home for a day or two—at all events for a day—and a somewhat unsual riot is making itself felt amongst the bushes and gravelled walks of this dear old place. The evening is perfect, calm, delicious,—

"The genty air, sae lady-like, Has on a scented gown,"

and not one rough or hurried breeze disturbs the beauty of the coming night.

"We are on our way to the raspberries," says Batty O'Grady, moving by a little group. "Janet is so beastly greedy there is no holding her back." "I like that," says Janet, indignantly. "Why, it was you who suggested going. If that's all—" she draws back, or rather would have done so, but that a force superior to her own drags her onwards.

"Hypocrisy is the worst of all vices, Jane!" says Mr. O'Grady, in a loud and condemnatory tone. His voice is still loud as he compels her forward—loud enough to drown her still indignant protests and explanations.

"Let us all go and eat raspberries," says Mrs. Egerton, hospitably. All means the two Brandes, Victor Mowbray, Madge, and Vincent. She had taken advantage of the Squire's absence and his grudging half permission to let the girls see something of their neighbours during the past week—to ask all these young people up to-day.

There had been somebody else she would have liked to ask, too, but though she had not minded the Squire's sneers about the Brandes and Victor, she had minded them about—

At this moment somebody emerges from between the trees and comes straight towards her.

"I really think you might have asked *me*," says Colonel Eyre, looking bigger than ever and rather more warlike.

Mrs. Egerton's face shows a slight accession of colour.

"You are always so busy," says she. "And I

heard you were going to that 'at home' at the L'Estrange's to-day. We were asked; but the Squire—von know how peculiar he is."

This is a fling at the L'Estrange's, who are new people, and therefore abhorred of the Squire's soul. There is, besides, a very pretty girl belonging to this new clan, of whom Mrs. Egerton has heard of late that Colonel Eyre is much enamoured.

"Well, I was asked, too," says he, "but I thought I should like to come here instead—and as you once told me I was always welcome"—

"But why have you come?"

"To think things out."

"You do us a great honour, of course," says Mrs. Egerton, "to come here to think out Miss L'Estrange. She is wonderfully charming. One of the most charming people I have seen for some time."

"Is she?"

"You know she is."

"One of the most charming people vou have ever seen."

"Oh that I But you-how do you take her?"

"I have'nt taken her."

"Not yet," Mrs. Egerton laughs, a little drily. "Come, you know what I mean, how does she strike you?"

"Well, she's frank—and pretty—and interesting," says the Colonel, slowly, thoughtfully.

Mrs. Egerton sighs.

"Ah, it is always the way with them," says she, a little ruefully.

"With them?"

"The young—the pretty, growing girls. I sigh for the day when, perhaps, I, too, was frank and pretty and amusing."

"Amusing? Did I say Miss L'Estrange was amusing?"

"Interesting, then; it is all the same."

"I don't think so." The Colonel takes his glass from his eye, dusts it, and puts it back again. It takes him some time to do it. An eye-glass gives one boundless opportunities for thought, and quite a pull over the silly people who don't use one. "To be both interesting and amusing is seldom given to one person," says he, at length. "And as to being frank—frank people are as a rule very boring in the long run, even if they escape being rude. Now you—" He glances at her.

He stops, evidently afraid to go on. Mrs.

Egerton bursts out laughing, and holds up her hand. "And I," she says, "am neither amusing, nor frank, nor interesting: is that what 'Your Politeness' would say?"

"Far from it." He catches the plump, white hand and holds it. "You are interesting and frank and amusing, and"—with decision—"everything!"

"Tut!" says Mrs. Egerton, "don't be stupid. Let us go into the garden and see the children eating their raspberries."

"The children," as she had called them, with a modest desire to show him that she no longer posed as young, are enjoying themselves to the top of their bent.

Victor and Madge can be seen a good way off, standing between the raspberry canes, their heads dangerously close together, doing, however, little damage to the raspberries, whilst over there is Janet, in mad spirits, chasing Batty from one apple tree to another, with a view to putting the raspberry she has gathered, *not* into his mouth, but down his neck.

Batty, the wily, proves too much for her. Now here, now there he runs, and now he has doubled dexterously and caught her from behind, and holding her firmly by both elbows proceeds to utter dark threats of compensation unless she instantly declares "pax."

What form the compensation is to take is writ so largely in his eye that Janet, with a most unusual accession of colour on her soft cheeks, and a would-be frown, gives in, flinging the offending fruit far from her.

Pretty Janet! Such a child! and such a merry one! Filled with a gaiety that might easily degenerate into boisterousness, but that always keeps so well upon this side. Batty, casting a rueful glance after the berries flying into space, is conscious of two distinct regrets—one, that after all he hadn't given her the joy of putting them down his neck, and the other, that he hadn't taken the compensation, whether or no.

Vincent, with Tom Brande beside her, is running her dainty fingers over the bushes, finding the fruit unerringly. At first he had been frightened for those pretty hands, lest thorns should scratch them; but she laughed lightly all such fears to scorn. "She—she to be caught by a thorn! Why, she could tell him how to avoid them! Mr. Brande did not know how clever she was," and so on.

Her whole air to-day is light and happy. She is, indeed, hardly the same Vincent of a month ago; that shy girl, who had shrunk back into herself at the approach of any stranger, has now blossomed into a pretty creature, a little shy, a little wondering always—with hands outspread at times, appealing in their weakness—but now giving full play to the natural joyousness that springs always from a nature truly sweet.

From being an actual recluse she has stepped (with nervous feet 'tis true), into the broader path that lets her meet a few—a very few—intimates, Just one or two people with whom her nature feels in unison. Of these the Brandes had proved the most attractive.

Perhaps this state of things might never have come about but for the advent of Batty. He had been the match that had so unexpectedly fired the mine. Batty the inconsequent, had beyond all doubt been the means of drawing her from her seclusion into the open air of society. Her sisters, her father, had been all to her before Batty's coming. But the very having to meet and know him—that had been an education in itself.

She had not permitted herself to know people—Victor Mowbray excepted. From the time her early years were smitten with so sad, so sore an affliction, she had drawn back with a curious strength in one so young and fragile from contact with the world without—falling back upon her sisters, her governesses, and specially upon her father (whose very soul was centred in her) for the society that every human thing requires.

Batty's advent, so strange, so unexpected, had upset all this. It had carried her out of herself. It flung a new element into her silent life, and, as an experience, was unique. Vincent, with her usual nervousness, had held back from him at first; but it was impossible to be shy with this young Irishman, who knew no shyness himself, and who, with the sensitiveness that belongs to the land of Erin, had divined at once the terrible shrinking, the sad grief that held her aloof from her fellows. He tackled this miserable sadness and overcame it.

He did her the utmost good. He dragged her from her soul's darkness (he would have given a good deal to drag her from the other, the more material one) into a fuller view of life. He talked incessantly to her, whenever she was present (neglecting even the teasing of Janet, in which his heart delighted), taking the attitude towards her of one to whom it had never occurred that she was blind. He never seemed for a moment sorry for her—as all the others openly were, and he was quite particular about showing her no consideration—while all the time seeing indefatigably to her wants.

And all this *took* her—as the casual slang of the day has it. It was balm to the poor child's soul, who perhaps at times had suffered a good deal from the tender solicitude of those around her.

Batty she found delightful, and if, as has been hinted, his manner gave the impression of being a little behindhand in the way of thought for her, certainly no one in the house, not even her father, was more careful of her, more ready to guard her steps and to watch her darkened ways.

Thus when the girls, or the Squire, or Mrs. Egerton would rush forward with a spoken word of alarm if they saw her in danger of stumbling against anything, Batty, without that warning cry, would spring forward with a gay word or two that had nothing to do with the danger in hand, and tuck his hand beneath her arm, and still talking—(it was perfectly astonishing the amount of words he knew)—guide her past the immediate danger into a safer spot, without her lovely, wide, sightless eyes knowing anything about it.

He was like a fresh strong breeze to her, that carried her out of herself, and landed her on a better, a freer shore. His wonderful Irish vitality, so full, too, of a quick knowledge of the griefs and joys around him, attracted her, and drew her out of the mists of her sadness and away on the breast of its wave to that outer world she had dreaded her whole life through.

He had broken the spell that for years had held her; and sometimes as she gaily laughed with him, and teased him in return for his teasing, her sisters scarcely knew her to be the old reserved Vincent; whilst the Squire, looking on, felt in his heart—though he would have died rather than admit it—thankful for the chance that had thrown Batty into his house. He was the *more* thankful, in that, with all Vincent's undoubted delight in Batty's gay humour, there was no "philandering," as he always called it, about their friendship.

京 本 本 ギ

Tom Brande watching her now carefully, in spite of her pretty declarations of independence,

becomes suddenly conscious of an approaching footstep. He looks up with the quick clutch at his heart that presages evil, and sees that it is Cedric. A glance at his brother's face, which is pale but earnest, warns him of the errand on which he has come. A choking sensation rises in Tom's throat; there is a rush of blood to his head; all at once a dogged determination to stand still here beside her, and so prevent Cedric's declaration, takes hold of him. Why not? But for his own madness he, Tom, might have been the first to ask her. Madness of love that persuaded him that she was too beautiful, too sacred, too remote for mortal love!

The thought beats upon his brain, holding him, fascinating him. And then all at once he knows it cannot be. He—his brother's confidant—to now betray him? Cedric had told him of his intention to propose. It would be the basest of all base things to try to step in between the man who had trusted him, who believed in him—and the woman that man loved.

He will go. His honour requires so much of him, and all is not over yet. She may refuse him. "Someone is coming," says Vincent, lifting her sensitive face.

"Yes, my brother," says Tom, in a stifled tone.

He makes a faint signal to Cedric to come nearer—to say another word is beyond him. He turns away as Cedric draws near, and the coming and going clash in the blind girl's ears.

She turns helplessly to where Tom had been standing, and where now Cedric is!

"Who has gone?" asks she.

"My brother," replies he; and, alas! for the fatal likeness in the two voices, she thinks it is still the one who is gone to whom she is talking; though she cannot see, though the two voices are so alike that she cannot even hear any difference between them, still by some subtle instinct the poor child knows that one brother is not quite the same to her as the other.

And now he has laid bare his heart to her—has entreated her; and half frightened, half glad, she has pushed her little hand into his. Even as he clasps it, a slight surprise, a little revulsion of feeling, passes over her. Is this the hand that had held hers back from the thorns a moment or two ago. Oh! yes—yes, of course—how stupid she is. It must be the same; the voice is the same—and with

a little faint sense of amusement she tells herself that she has fallen in love with a voice! And how good of the voice to fall in love with her. Poor child! A sense of only half-understood triumph is urging her to her marriage. She will be as other girls are who have had tender lovers. Here is some one who will care for her, all her long life through—to whom, in spite of her sad affliction, she will be the dearest upon earth.

It is all over; she has promised to marry him, and Cedric, with a thrill of protective joy in his heart, has pressed his lips to her forehead.

"Tom will be so glad to hear of this," says he, tenderly.

Vincent starts perceptibly. "Tom?" Who, then has been with her all this afternoon, when she was gathering the berries? Who had held back her hand lest the thorns should hurt it? She feels the pressure of that hand still! Tom! She thought it had been Tom!

But the voice; it is the *voice* she loves. She turns and holds out her hands to Cedric, with a lovely, flushed smile.

"Tell Tom I am happy," says she.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Her hair's dark hue may not be said, But when she lifts her brow to mine, Earth in so deep a dusk is laid, That all the stars of love do shine."

MEANTIME a very different love affair is taking place somewhat lower down in the garden. Madge and Victor Mowbray, having wandered in an apparently artless but distinctly artful manner behind a fine hedge of escalonias that would defy the eye of one's own conscience to see through it, are now seated in a proximity that leaves nothing to be desired, upon the raised bank at its back!

"I may speak to you now, Madge? You know that?"

"You often spoke to me before," says Madge, with a pretence at not understanding, that is quite done away with by the little swift glance she casts at him from under her long lashes. But the foolish boy doesn't see it; he frowns a little, and, moving, makes a little—a very little—distance between them.

"But not like this?"

"No, no, indeed!" with meaning. She has resented the frown and movement.

"This is surely better!" eagerly, in spite of his disappointment.

"Worse!" shaking her head, and staring reproachfully at the far horizon. "Far worse."

"How on earth can you say that?" with some wrath. "Now when my uncle says I am to be his heir—"

"I don't care about your uncle." Madge lifts an unkind shoulder.

"Or about his heir either, perhaps?" very naturally offended, and moving still further towards the end of the bank.

"Oh! as for him."

"Well-what have I done, anyway?"

"It isn't what you've *done*." Madge casts another adorable glance at him from under her big straw hat—a glance full of sweet coquetry. "It's what you are *doing*."

"What am I doing except trying to tell you that I love you?"

"You told me that before!" says Miss Grace, with proud indifference.

"Well," coldly, "I have nothing more to tell you except that again."

Silence.

" Nothing but that," repeats he firmly.

"I can't hear you there," says she.

"You could if you liked," says Victor, in so cold, so distant a way that the coquette gives in. She casts a little, slow, lovely glance at him all along the bank, it reaches his shoulder first, and then his ear, and now his eyes, and all at once as their glances meet, her lips break into an irresistible smile.

"Well—I don't like!" says she; and in another moment they are in each other's arms, and are laughing and kissing in the same breath.

"You love me; you do love me," says Victor, his handsome face reading hers anxiously. "I have hoped it—feared it—thought it—but now—"

"Well now," saucily, "you know it, I suppose."

"Yes, I do," says he, catching her pretty impertinence from her. "And Madge, isn't it splendid, what a good fellow he is after all. I am to be his heir, and he has told your father of it, and——"

"Well?"

"Well, your father has given a *sort* of consent you know, because I shall not only be Lord Mowbray some time or other, but owner of the estates as well." His tone is so entirely free of exultation of any sort over this fact that her father's mercenary dwellings on it come the more clearly—the more abominably—home to her; she moves restlessly, and draws herself away from him.

"I don't care to dwell on that," says she, coldly.

"Oh, Madge; when it is everything to me! It has given you to me. And me to—But perhaps you don't care about that. I could not possibly be as much to you as you are to me."

"Oh, you are, you are!" cries she, bursting into tears and flinging her arms round his neck. "You are wrong there. And I do care. I care with all my heart. And I'm glad you're somebody's heir, because now——" she sobs unrestrainedly, if happily.

"Now, darling?"

"Now we can belong to each other!"

* * * * *

Up here in the small marquee Batty is pouring out tea with all his usual grace. Ever since his arrival at the Court he has been allowed this privilege, Mrs. Egerton having at once felt he was distinctly worthy of it. Assisted by Janet, he wields the teapot and the cream-ewer with an air of distinction hardly to be surpassed.

Now all the cups are full, and Mr. O'Grady, with a little signal to Janet and a sigh of joy, no doubt, for the prowess he has displayed so far (not as Janet very meanly hints afterwards, for the prowess he is about to display), sinks down upon a garden chair beside that caustic damsel, and begins a serious flirtation with the short-bread. In this encounter it may be said at once that the short-bread comes off decidedly second best. After which victory he directs his attention to the sandwiches, aided and abetted by Janie, who keeps him well in countenance all through, whatever her gibes may be later on when "the feast is over and the lights are low."

Tom Brande, standing a little apart from the rest, is trying to solve the meaning of Vincent's absence, and the strange dreamy look in Cedric's eyes. Does her absence mean well or ill for him? Mrs. Egerton and the others are all laughing and talking together, and, indeed, all is going "merry as a marriage bell," when suddenly from the direction of the house a shout brought forth by stentorian lungs echoes through the air.

"Henrietta! Henrietta!"

Mrs. Egerton lets her spoon fall and sits erect.

The Squire must have come home a day too soon! She turns her affrighted eyes on Madge, who on her part makes a movement that takes her several inches farther away from Victor than she had been a moment ago.

"Someone calling you, I think, Mrs. Egerton," says Cedric Brande, who naturally is not *au fait* with the Squire's eccentricities.

"Mr. Grace, I fancy," says Mrs. Egerton, faintly. She makes a noble effort to smile, with a view to concealing the pangs of fear from which she is suffering, but fails ignominiously. The smile is nothing but a fixed grin, suggestive of horror. "He has come home a little sooner than we expected, Madge, dear," with an appealing glance.

But Madge's return glance is so agonised as to put an end to all hope of help from her; and Mrs. Egerton, with a whirling brain, tells herself that in another minute or so the Squire will be amongst them—en them, as it were—and goodness only knows what he will say to these poor inoffensive young men! It is at this point that she feels a light touch on her shoulder, and hears a whisper in her ear. Both belong to Batty.

"Sit tight," says Mr. O'Grady, briefly but beautifully; "I'll tackle him!"

In another instant, with extraordinary dexterity, he drops the front curtains of the marquee, thus hiding its inmates from the prying eyes of the world outside, and not too soon! for now they can hear him shouting to the Squire, who has evidently just come round the corner that commands the tent.

"You, Squire!" roars Batty with extraordinary heartiness. "Home so soon! The girls will be glad. Seen 'em yet?"

"Seen them? I can't see anybody," roars back the Squire, whose face is like a peony.

"Such a blessing you have come," says Batty.
"I can assure you." The shouts are less appalling now to the anxious listeners in the marquee, as the two outside seem to be approaching each other. There is terror in this thought, too, however, as of course the Squire must by this be pretty close to them. Mrs. Egerton is conscious of a distinct regret that she never amongst her other branches of education learned to faint!

"Where the deuce is Henrietta?" demands the Squire.

"Mrs. Egerton? With the girls, I fancy. You didn't meet them on your way?"

"No. And not in the house, Mills says. They are in that stuffy thing down there, perhaps?" (indicating the tent with his hand). There is an awful minute in the "stuffy thing," during which Mrs. Egerton grows grey, and Janie nearly gives away the whole situation by a smothered, if hysterical, burst of laughter.

"Oh, I've just been there," says Batty, cheerfully. "But look here, Squire, I am awfully glad you are back. I am, indeed. I thought of sending you a telegram yesterday. If you only knew how they've been going on. How those—"

"Girls!" says the Squire, in the tone of a tiger preparing to spring.

Frightful tension in tent. Is Batty going to betray them?

"Girls! chut!" says Batty, contemptuously; "far, far worse than that. Who cares for girls?" (Janie, inside, makes a movement, but is promptly suppressed by Madge.) "But your pansies, Squire! I am sorry to say that——"

"Eh? What—what!" The Squire is now all alive on another tack. "And I told that infernal fool to look after them——"

"Well, I don't think he has followed out your instructions. I can't be quite *sure*, of course. I'm not much of a judge of pansies, I confess, but they seem to me to look rather—er—well—raggy, you know. Better come yourself and see 'em—eh?"

After this the dwellers in the tent hear nothing save the sound of departing footsteps. Sweeter sounds were never heard! Batty has saved them!

And now Mrs. Egerton, with a courage worthy of a better cause, wakes from her silence and tries once more to take up the thread of her late conversation. But Tom Brande very naturally has seen through it all, and, after a decent delay, makes his adieux to his hostess.

He is, indeed, only longing for the opportunity to get away; tortured by anxiety to know how it has gone with Cedric, he feels as if he will never be soon enough alone with his brother.

He goes forward to say good-bye to Mrs. Egerton, but Cedric reaches her side before he does, and Tom falls back. Feeling wretchedly uncertain, he watches his brother's movements—his face, and, again, hers—Mrs. Egerton's. Alas! for any small hope he had ever had! Mrs. Egerton's face is now one delightful smile as

Cedric whispers to her—and even the words, spoken so low as to be unheard by any ordinary listener—"I congratulate you," come home with a desperate force to Tom, who could hardly be classed as ordinary in *this galere*.

He turns aside abruptly, and has reached the entrance gate, when Cedric overtakes him.

"Tom, what a hurry you were in."

"Well?" asks Tom, turning slowly to him.

"It is well," says his brother.

"She has accepted you?"

"Yes, poor darling girl! I trust and pray, Tom, I may be able to make her happy."

Tom makes a movement of his head. Speech is beyond him. He turns aside to a stile on his right, and has one foot on it when Cedric calls to him.

"Not coming my way, Tom? Not when I have so much to say to you?"

"Impossible. I *must* call at the Grant's Farm this evening. Their rent is far overdue."

"Well, get the interview over as soon as you can, and give them good terms! The poor are always to be pitied. And be in good time for dinner whatever you do. I have much to talk over with you."

Again Tom's only reply is a bare nod—his face well turned away—after which he springs over the stile, and plunges into the wood beyond.

Now, by ill-luck, the Squire, in spite of all Batty's manœuvres, has returned to the front, so far as to see the backs of the departing foe; to see also Mrs. Egerton, who is waving a kindly adieu to Victor and Colonel Eyre.

"Ha!" calls the Squire, wildly, prancing down upon his prey. "There you are at last, Henrietta! I might have known how it would be! How I should find you in my supposed absence entertaining all the young men in the county. You ought to be ashamed of yourself! And when, too, I told you that those girls were to be kept as quiet as possible——"

Mrs. Egerton puts up her hand.

"Spare me one moment if you can," says she, with excessive dignity; Cedric's last words have armed her with a weapon on the strength of which she feels she can defy the foe. "This is hardly the time, John, for you to begin your incivilities. I have a matter of great importance to tell you. Vincent," with ever-growing solemnity, "has this afternoon consented to marry Cedric Brande!"

She pauses to watch the effect of her bombshell, which indeed exceeds all that she had looked for. It deals far greater confusion than she had dreamt of in her fondest dreams. The Squire stands speechless after its delivery, his face aghast. He seems indeed so disturbed, so positively grief-stricken, that Mrs. Egerton begins to feel quite sorry for him.

"I wish you would not take it like this, John! Surely, considering all things, you would not grudge her a glimpse of happiness."

"Married!" says the Squire, as if trying to believe in it and failing. "The little one married! Oh, nonsense!"

"It won't be altogether *losing* her," says Mrs. Egerton, gently. "He lives so very near. Quite close to us. in fact."

"Oh! hang him!" says the Squire. "And as for her living close to me—a fig for that! Once married, she'll never be the same to me again!"

He turns away, and walks with bowed head along the terrace. At the end of it he turns.

"Tell that rascal Batty, that I can see through him now, and his anxiety about my pansies."

Mrs. Egerton takes no heed of this. Batty is very well able to look after himself—but Vincent—She runs up to the girl's room, and finds her there, sitting in a lounging chair, leaning a little forward, as if gazing with her sightless eyes into strange places of her mind.

Mrs. Egerton slips her arms round her.

"You are happy, darling? You love him?"

"Ah! I don't know," says the girl, with a curious laugh, that is followed by a long and quivering sigh.

"You don't know?" anxiously.

"No, I don't. I love the voice." She rises as though it is no longer possible to her to sit still. She hesitates, and then with a strange petulence in one so sweet, "Why, why are there two voices in the world so much alike?"

CHAPTER XVIII.

"When first we met we did not guess
That love would prove so hard a master."

Tom Brande had not gone home to dinner after all. He had walked all night through the silent woods, until at last, exhausted, he had sunk upon a bed of moss, and fallen for a while into that oblivion that means the best of all things to sorrowing hearts—forgetfulness.

When he wakes the day is just dawning, a last remnant of night still fighting with the heralds of the day. A dewy freshness is upon the air; whilst above, the faint glimmer of the dying stars can still be seen.

He gets to his feet and looks around him. Already the red grows more lusty in the sky, and

"Dawn, as a panther, springs
With fierce and fire-fledged wings,
Leaps on the land that rings
From her bright feet."

He takes in the glories of the growing morn, and then mechanically starts for his home. With the first movement of his body all comes back to him. It is at an end, then—his hope, his fear. She is going to marry Cedric.

He walks steadily onward through the tall bracken—now startling a hare at his feet, now listening to the morning call of the birds one to the other, whilst from below, in a kind of semitone, comes the love-note of the dove—"Coo, coo." It is all so calm, so terribly tender, that the man listening with his breaking heart grows almost maddened by it. There is, too, a thought that will not be silenced. He must go to her; congratulate her! It will be expected of him. To-day he must go!

* * * * *

She is here, alone, in the morning room, and as he enters, hearing his step, she looks up quickly. She had been standing, moving her fingers over a bunch of late carnations, as if feeling their colours, but now she lets them fall, and turns her head towards him expectantly.

"Ah! you have come!" says she, a little shyly, a little nervously; "I thought you would not be here until the afternoon." She goes to him softly with little outstretched hands. There is nothing eager in her movements, however—rather something that speaks of uncertainty. She is looking very beautiful in her shyness and distress, and Tom, filled with mad love and pity for her, grows tongue-tied. He can only put his own hands and take those small, pathetic ones, and clasp them in a close embrace.

As his hands touch hers the blind girl's face changes. It lights up with a splendid gladness, and her mouth quivers to a happy smile. All the uncertainty, the hesitation of a moment since, is gone. "You will have to forgive me," says she, tremulously, "but," her fingers tightening around his, "I have had doubts, many doubts, since that hour—last evening. I have even told myself since that I could not. . . But now—now I know I love you!"

Tom is still holding her hands, pressing them convulsively in his agitation. In another moment, if he wills it, she will be in his arms—his, as instinct tells him, and his only. The beautiful mouth is uplifted to his. He makes a slight, sharp movement that draws her to him.

Then something that was born with him, the strong, the splendid bias towards the right, that we call honour, and that makes the gentleman—prevails. He pushes her back gently.

"Why, that is well," says he, gaily—if she could only have seen the gaiety of his face.' "Of course you must learn to love me, as I am to be your brother."

" Brother!"

She shrinks back. Her face grows slowly from extreme pallor to a more extreme red. Oh! the shame on the lovely face. It goes to his heart.

"As for the doubts," says he, rattling on with an almost frantic pleasantry, and quoting her own words to show her how completely he has misunderstood her real meaning. "No wonder you have had them. I'm not the real brother, by any means. Am I? But that comes, I hope, of having never had a sister until now." The emphasis he lays on the now is immense, and he draws in his breath a little quickly as he makes it.

"You are?——" says she, breaking in upon his honest attempts at indifference ruthlessly.

"Why, Tom Brande," says he with a light laugh. What that laugh costs him is hardly to be counted. But the awful exigencies of the moment force him to it. "But"—he has now got to the height of his reckless wretchedness—"now that I think of it, as I am to be your brother for the future, I may as well be 'Tom' to you, without the Brande, eh?"

"Tom, Tom Brande," repeats she, "but it was you who were"——she checks herself sharply, and there follows a little silence, in which she seems to be thinking, thinking. Then, with an air that she evidently believes to be quite Machiavellian, but that would not have deceived a baby—"Oh

no, of course not. It was not you who were with me yesterday when I was picking the rasp-berries?"

There is an instant, agonised questioning on her part, an instant awful hesitation upon his. Then all at once he knows. Vincent, blind, had not seen his going or the coming of Cedric, and their voices—had she thought he—Tom—still was with her when she listened to Cedric's proposal? Oh, the fatal similarity of their voices! But the lie has to be told.

" No, it was not," says he.

She draws back. Her face has suddenly grown very white.

"How stupid I am!" says she, colouring faintly. "That is the worst of being blind. I thought, just now, that you were——" She stops. What was she going to say? ("The man I have promised to marry.") She lifts her hand to her head, and presses it against her forehead as if distressed; a little trouble grows upon her face. "That you were——"

"Who?" asks Tom, with passion strongly repressed.

"Cedric," says she gently, after a slight pause. She says it firmly, and smiles as she says it, but her smile is faint.

"Ah! well I am not Cedric," says Tom.

There is a silence, during which she has evidently been trying to think out the two brothers, comparing them in her own mind without knowing it, and quite impossibly—as their voices alone are known to her.

"Then you are Tom?" says she. "Do you know I am puzzled sometimes. It seems," laughing nervously, "such treachery to your brother not to be able to distinguish him from another. But that is the sadness of the blind!" She pauses, and tears rise in her sightless eyes. "I can't know anyone really. Not even Cedric. But you," quietly, most sorrowfully, "can tell me about yourself at all events. You can give me eyes, so far as you are concerned. I have sometimes been puzzled by you. To-day you are sad, to-morrow gay, and again the next day you laugh, and the next day after that you are silent, sad."

"Whatever my happy days may seem to you," says he at last, speaking only because she no longer will speak, "I am at heart, believe me, the saddest man on earth."

"Oh! no, not that," cries she, hurriedly. "Not sad. I would not have you sad. And it is not true—sometimes you seem very happy." Again she stops short, lost in a mist of thought. The two brothers—the two voices—one with so merry a cadence, the other so sweet, so sad: yet both the same. Are they one and the same, or— Oh! for eyes to see. Is she confusing one brother's mood with the other? Has she blended two men into one. Oh! dear Heaven! how dreadful it is to be helpless, sightless like this, when one's whole life is in the balance!

"But sometimes," she goes on, hurriedly, "it is true, you do seem sad! . . . Now—to-day—Oh! but it is not like you to be unhappy. Oh! that I could know—that I could understand—that I could be sure——

All at once she burst into tears.

Of what did she want to be sure?

CHAPTER XIX.

"Therefore more sweet and strange
Has been the mystery
Of thy long love to me,
That doth not quit, nor change,
Nor tax my solemn heart;
That kisseth in a gloom,
Knowing not who thou art!
That givest, nor to whom."

Those words, "That I could be sure," ring through Tom Brande's head during his walk home, and for many days following. It had often occurred to him that science might do something for those poor, beautiful eyes of hers, that had not been born blind! And now, sitting here this afternoon eating his cutlet, a sudden wild desire to stir, to move, to compel some one in authority to take up her case and see if all this great modern talent, of which so much is being said, cannot be used with a splendid result on her, is carrying him away.

"That I could be sure!" Oh! she ought to be made sure! The words have hammered themselves into his brain. A sense of loyalty towards Cedric, scarcely to be defined, has held him back hitherto from taking any action. For seven long days, indeed, his mind has lain dormant, but now all petty fears and longings seem to fall from him, leaving only remembrance of her tears, her grief, her passionate longing to see—to know—and,

rising from the luncheon table, he decides sharply on going down to The Court and pleading her cause in his own way with the Squire. It seems a forlorn hope, the Squire being a fortress very hard to take; but Courage is doubly strong when it has its root in Love!

As he walks down to The Court his thoughts can scarcely be called pleasant. He has taken knowledge of the Squire, and feels his task to be by no means an easy one. Probably he will consider him impertinent. On the other hand, however, he may take kindly to the idea. Tom's thoughts sway to and fro as he goes, but are not at their best entirely satisfactory.

"To weave and unweave, and to weary
Of efforts that fade into air,
To know hope of all things most dreary,
To paint her of all things most fair."

Well, Tom carries hope with him as he goes, though to tell the truth he doesn't find her very "fair." As he reaches the village he meets Cedric and tells him of his intention. And Cedric looks back at him as if dumb, and not knowing what to say.

"Won't he come with him?" asks Tom.

"No, not now, later on-he may-"

Having invaded the Squire's den, Tom sits down before that truculent soul, and prepares for a prolonged siege. It is easy enough to state his views, it is not so easy to combat the Squire's, and in fact after an hour's hard fight, the Squire is "of the same opinion still" as when they started, he will not hear of it? An operation! it is impossible, absurd; and to raise false hopes like that!

"They may not be false, however," says Tom.

"But yet they may," retorts the Squire.

"You seem determined to take the gloomy view of it, sir. Give her at least the option of refusing."

"And thus raise false hopes, as I have said."

"And that may not be false, as I have said. I am convinced if you spoke to her she would gladly, thankfully, consent to this operation."

"Even if she did—how could I submit to their torturing of her?"

"My dear Mr. Grace! Torture is a word almost obsolete nowadays—as you must know—when applied to surgical operations. Pain has been reduced to a minimum by modern science. They would simply put her under the influence of some anæsthetic, if they found sight might be restored, and she would know very little about the matter from start to finish. At least so I have been told."

"Ah! told!"

At this moment Mrs. Egerton—accompanied by Cedric and Batty O'Grady—appears at the open window.

"Can I have a word with you, John? Oh!" noticing the strained expressions on the faces before her, "I see you are busy. Well, another time."

"No, pray don't go," says Tom, starting to his feet. He makes a faint sign to her. "We are having an argument here, Mr. Grace and I, and I believe you will be an advocate on my side. So I meanly claim your help. Cedric," glancing kindly at his brother, "will, I am afraid, be on the other side—the more merciful side, perhaps—but yet—I doubt it. Anyhow, everything turns, of course, on the eventual success or failure."

Mrs. Egerton laughs at him, and shakes her head.

"I'm sorry," says she, "but it sounds like a problem, and I'm not good at that sort of thing."

Tom smiles involuntarily, and then in a few words—the Squire, sitting doggedly silent and refusing to speak—explains to her his mission.

"You, Cedric, I have sometimes hinted to you of my belief," says he, turning from her to his brother.

"Yes," returns Cedric, his eyes on the ground. He is feeling unnerved, uncertain. If this thing should be accomplished, where would the life's work he has allotted to himself be then? She would be no longer blind, sad, afflicted—

"I shouldn't have dreamed of taking the liberty of speaking to Mr. Grace about it," Tom is explaining hurriedly to Mrs. Egerton, full of the knowledge that he has indeed taken a step that might well be resented by many; "but that I know Vincent now—in a way—belongs to me——" He stops short here, and a great light grows in his eyes for a moment, then pales. Mrs. Egerton has seen it, however, and her heart sinks. "What I mean is," goes on Tom, now a little white, but smiling, "that soon she will be my sister, and—— I would have my sister see me!"

Batty, who has not come in, although he had certainly not been sent away, and who is leaning

against the ivy that covers the walls of the window, feels a passing fear that, should Tom's "sister," as he calls her, ever see him, there is very likely to be a conflagration in his particular sky. But Batty is a wise youth, and chews the cud of thought, together with the end of an ivy stem, in silence, and very greatly to the detriment of his digestion. But one must incur great dangers in great hours.

"You mean?" asks Mrs. Egerton nervously, who, too, is troubled by Tom's desire.

"I mean that I think she ought to see a specialist on sight as soon as possible. Great heavens!" breaking out suddenly on catching a glance of his brother's face that strikes him as cold, unwilling, "can't you all know what it would mean to her? To see—to see—"

"Oh yes-yes," says Mrs. Egerton, hurriedly.

"You are all on the same tack," says the Squire, testily. "All, that is, except Cedric. You?" He looks inquiringly at the young man.

"If one could be sure—— But how to be sure!" replies he, in a muffled tone.

"Ay! That is it. To give her a chance of thinking that she may be as others are. To instil in her mind the belief that she may see, only to have that belief 'destroyed in the end! It is cruel, horrible!" cries the Squire, vehemently. "Henrietta! I wonder you give countenance to it. Anyhow, I shall not. Surely her father and her future husband are the two best fitted to judge, to arrange for her happiness."

Mrs. Egerton turns quickly to Cedric. "I can't understand you," says she. "You, of all others, should be the most eager for her to see."

"If such a thing could be," says he, slowly.

"But, the will, the decision of God, is that to be lightly thought of?" His beautiful face is earnest—anxious. Yet there is fear and indecision in it. He hardly knows himself the meaning of his thoughts. Is it the will of God he dreads, or, the knowledge that if light comes to the girl's eyes she will be no longer a thing to care for, to lavish his life upon?

"It is the will of God," says Mrs. Egerton, "that all his creatures should be happy."

There is a little silence. Then the Squire, rising, looks round him in a worried sort of way. His eyes light on Batty, who is still leaning against the ivy, and still pondering.

The Squire turns to him as a last resource.

"You, Batty," says he. "You have heard all. What do you think?"

"I think you ought to ask her," says Batty, promptly.

"Oh! the deuce! Never, never," says the Squire.

"Excellent advice, I think," says Mrs. Egerton, in a low tone.

"Well, well, well!" The Squire's face has grown a little grey. "If you will have it then. But the child herself—Well, there. Tell her if you will. She will refuse, and there will be an end of it."

Mrs. Egerton beckons to Batty to go. He has fulfilled his mission. As for the others—they must remain. Her father, her husband who is to be, and his brother. . . . To dismiss the brother would have been almost impossible, and yet, if only he would go!

And now Vincent is here—has had it all ex-

plained to her, and is standing pale, trembling, utterly unnerved. Suddenly she puts out her hand in the terribly vague way of the blind, as if searching for something.

"Cedric!" cries she softly—piercingly. "Tell me, tell me what I shall do?"

"How can I!" His tone is almost tragic. All his life seems to be contracted into this one moment. From the first day on which he saw Vincent, the idea of a mission had dawned upon him; and he had always longed for a mission—a responsibility—something to which he might dedicate himself. And with a growing tenderness for the girl, had grown, too, the desire to protect—to shelter her—her, a creature afflicted by God. But now! If God should in His mercy give her back her sight, where would be then the ground for his devotion?

"Oh! you can! Tell me what you think," cries she, in a little frightened way that goes to Tom's heart.

"Give me time," says Cedric in an anguished voice. "I don't know what I think."

"Ah, try, try to tell me," cries she, with a little sob in her throat. "If it should be——But—if it should end in nothing."

"Oh! Vincent, charce it!" cries Tom, suddenly, uncontrollably.

The girl looks up eagerly.

"Ah! There! Now you see you do know," cries she. "Cedric, come to me."

"It was not Cedric," says Mrs. Egerton, quickly.
"It was Tom who said that."

"Tom!" Vincent's face shows a sharp disappointment. She turns aside. Mrs. Egerton goes quickly to her, and takes her in her arms. Two tears stealing from those beautiful blind eyes, run slowly down the poor child's cheeks. Cedric—eager—pale with uncertainty, is leaning forward—will she refuse—

The Squire breaks the silence.

"I told you—I told you," says he, fiercely, glaring round him, with a view to hiding the fact that his own eyes are by no means dry, "that she would not hear of it. And you are right, my poor, foor little girl—you—"

"No—no!" exclaims she cagerly, interrupting him with a sort of soft vehemence. "I will chance it! In all these years I have never, never forgotten the lovely light! Let me—let me——"she crushes her hands against her eyes. A faint little whisper comes from her. "Oh! dear, dear God—let me see again!"

"This is all your doing, Henrietta—every bit of it!" says the Squire, furiously, an hour later.

"Well, if so, I am not ashamed of it, my dear John. If there is a chance of her recovering her sight, would you be the one to say no to it?"

She is looking at the Squire with a challenge in her eyes, and he is looking back at her with extreme irritation in his. Answer, however, he makes none.

"You think, I suppose, that there is no hope?"

"Exactly so," snaps the Squire.

"Well, I don't, and William Eyre thinks with me."

"Oh! That idiot! I don't care what he thinks." Mrs. Egerton rises with dignity.

"Would you like to know what I think?"

"Not particularly," says the Squire, with great presence of mind. Curiosity conquers him, however, a moment later. "Well—what?" demands he, truculently.

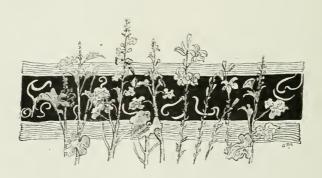
"That you are abominably rude?"

"Just because I said Eyre was an idiot. Well, isn't he? Coming here every day almost, to see Madge, who doesn't care a fig about him. I hate a fool."

Mrs. Egerton regards him long and meaningly.

"So do I!" says she at last, sweeping majestically out of the room.

(To be continued.)



OCCUPATIONS FOR GENTLEWOMEN.

III.-LITERATURE.

By MAXWELL GRAY.

S HOULD literature be a profession at all? Broadly, no; narrowly, yes. Letters proper, in the higher walks, rarely produce bread and cheese; letters proper, in the lower walks-to wit, journalism, popular treatises, biographies, ephemeral essays, criticism, and the like-with diligence, "keep the wolf from the door"; and high and low alike may be, to a great extent, acquired by study and practice. But when we reach the grand domain of creative literature, of poetry, fiction, and drama, we ascend to the loftier regions of art; regions that may be entered only by the few, the specially and exceptionally gifted few, to enter which no amount of study and practice avail, and the exercise of which may, or may not, produce such pecuniary results as are expected from what is commonly called a profession. Poetry will pay only when very bad or very good, possibly not then; for poetry is seldom read in these days, still more rarely in the poet's lifetime; some mysteriously necessary perfecting process is apparently accomplished by time in the spiritual wine poured by the Muses, as in the earthlier drink produced from the grape. But fiction must be very bad or very good not to pay; since everyone reads, and many devour and commit excesses in, fiction, and the fresher, the more contemporaneous the fiction, the greater the market for it. Fiction then may be a profession? Yes; but in so far as it is a profession and pursued for gain, it will fail (I do not say in pecuniary results); and in so far as it is pursued as an art for art's sake, it will succeed (again not from a pecuniary point of view).

We cannot all dwell continually upon the mountain tops, breathing the ample ether and divine air of the gods; some of us must from time to time descend to humble hearth-fires in the valleys, and there assiduously prepare the pot-au-feu, to which end we must vend our spiritual wares in open market, thus converting liberal art into a profession or means of gaining a livelihood. But, once in the market-place, the air of which is neither divine nor ample, but choked with earth-dust and foul with exhalations, some authors are chiefly intent on pleasing the appetite of the buyers, so that their produce loses its ethereal sayour; others, untouched

by the market taint, care more for the intrinsic value of their stuff; of these last are the immortals, but the panderers are the most prosperous.

Fiction, the most lucrative department of literature, no longer commands the high prices of the days of Dickens and of George Eliot, partly, no doubt, because there is now such a large accumulated stock of good novels in existence. Yet, even in the present day, novelists not only pick up a decent living, but sometimes actually become wealthy-it is said. Nor is it to be disputed that wise people will not, if they can help it, depend entirely upon literature, but use it as an adjunct to another profession, unless, indeed, they be wealthy enough to pursue letters as a liberal art. Poetry, fiction, and drama will gain rather than lose by the more frequent contact with life and the broader and more comprehensive views of humanity ensured by the second profession, as well as by the mental and moral stir and glow produced by a life of strenuous action.

The profession of literature being conceded, how does it fit women? Excellently well. In the first place, it is free; it can be practised without licence or diploma from the state or any corporate body; it can be followed silently, secretly, even anonymously; hence it is the one profession and the one art from which the tyranny and jealousy of male mankind cannot exclude women. Such arts as vocal music and the drama are, of course, exceptions; sex being in these, as in life, a necessity. Again literature is almost the only calling, a wider word than profession, that depends upon results, and succeeds by merit only. People only read what gives them pleasure, or information, or mental discipline; what they want, in short. No number of letters after an author's name will make people read a dull book, nor will a female name on the title page prevent them from enjoying an entertaining work. A feminine appellation will, indeed, ensure a harsher criticism than that dealt to a work presumably by a man; but that is of small moment. Criticism is in these days a farce, serving chiefly as a form of advertisement. Even that astounding product of the present period of literary decadence, a "boom," can give but an ephemeral fame to literary mediocrity or worthlessness, though it can for a time eclipse honest merit, and for a time even turn common ink into a Pactolus stream.

The fact that literary work can, to a certain extent, be done at odd moments and concurrently with other occupations, makes it eminently fit for women, who have, even when free from the grand primal duties that go with wifehood and motherhood, so many more ex-professional claims upon their time and energy than men. Jane Austen is said to have written her marvellous studies of character and manners in the midst of her family circle, with people coming and going, laughing, and exchanging small talk around her. It was sometimes observed that her correspondence was voluminous, but she was never, I think, accused of literature. Few writers are capable of such feats as that; still, a quiet room, pen, ink, and paper, and the certainty of a few hours' uninterrupted solitude, is all that the most fastidious writer needs in the way of workshop and tools. Books, especially books of reference, are no doubt desirable adjuncts; still their presence in the actual workshop may, to some extent, be supplied by notes and memoranda taken elsewhere.

It has sometimes been observed that the above are the only stock-in-trade necessary for the production of literature. This is a fatal mistake. Nothing comes amiss to the literary artist, from a thorough knowledge of philosophy, the exact sciences, Greek and Latin, and the higher mathematics, to a mastery of cookery, carpentry, and the treatment proper for infants, horned cattle, and sick persons. Only let poets and novelists beware of too much physical science and metaphysic, or rather let them take care that the weight of their learning do not overbalance their imagination and emotions, and, above all, let them keep in touch with human life. Goethe's vast genius was cramped and half stifled by his too great devotion to philosophy and physical science. George Eliot became more ponderous and didactic, and more enslaved by sesquipedalian words, beneath her daily-growing burden of learning and philosophy, until she lost the secret of the magic that cast such a spell over the readers of the Adam Bedes and Silas Marners, and lapsed finally to the heavy complexities of a Deronda. Yet the absolute necessity of knowledge, even in the less erudite branches of the literary craft, and more especially of the know-

ledge of human life so essential to all fictive art, places women writers at a sad disadvantage, even in these better days of dawning female education. And when we reflect upon the numerous phases and aspects of human life from which women are, partly by custom and partly by necessity, excluded, we cannot but wonder how they produce fiction at all, much less well, in spite of their pronounced aptitude for narrative. Browning is an extreme instance, an intensified woman, as far as regards knowledge of life, from which her invalid seclusion completely shut her off, though she had advantages denied her contemporaries in leisure and learning. No sane person, however insensible to the merit of Robert Browning's poetic work, can deny that, besides being a great original thinker, he was a far greater poet than his wife, that his poetic work has an infinitely broader scope, strikes deeper, soars higher, is stronger, nobler, richer, more enduring than hers; and yet every reasonable being must admit that his great admiration for her genius, which he held to be far above his own, is not without foundation. He alone knew what she was capable of, and he alone was fully acquainted with the bitter limitations of her life. "She," he said once at Florence, "is a great poet and I a small one. She creates, makes something out of nothing; I only compose -put things together, manipulate ready-made material." (These are not his exact words; they are quoted from memory in substance only.) Every one must see that the grand defect of Elizabeth Browning's poetry, a poetry which more than most had its raison d'être in a criticism of life, is the falseness and unreality of its pictures and judgment of life. What could she know of the great spectacular drama of human existence, imprisoned as she was during her most impressionable and precious years, in solitude and pain, guarded from the very echoes of the great life-tide that broke on the bounds of her narrow existence? How ghastly in its improbability is the hideous "Aurora Leigh," how feeble and foolish "Lady Geraldine's Courtship." Yet what a warm glow of wasted genius in the latter. But when Elizabeth Browning is simply lyric and remains within the sphere of her own experience, as in the Sonnets from the Portuguese, the full force of her great genius is discovered, and one sees how much greater a poet she would have been under favouring circumstances.

That knowledge of the actual human life throbbing round and about the artist, so helpful to the poet, is an absolute necessity to the novelist. Even the splendid genius of Charlotte Brontë could not dispense with it. All her work is cramped and crippled by the narrow range of her personal experience: when she leaves those strait, safe bounds, she wanders in darkness and stumbles. Nowhere is the force of her stifled genius more strongly felt than in the fire and ardour with which she realises and compels her readers to realise, with a vividness like actual experience, scenes and circumstances that, when the spell of the narrative is off us, we know to be impossible.

It may be objected that men are sometimes invalids; that Branwell Brontë's surroundings were much the same as those of his three gifted sisters. To this one may reply, that, had Elizabeth Barrett been a man, she would have entered into the experiences of other young men; also, that men, especially young men, rarely submit to such restrictions as were imposed upon her youth. "Gin I mun doy, I mun doy, so git ma ma yaäle," is a frequent masculine response to doctor's restrictions; while Branwell Brontë's actual contact with the outer world was enormous in comparison with that of his sisters, and had he possessed any moral fibre at all commensurate with his intellect, that contact would have been infinitely greater than it was. Nature is hard upon women; custom is harder.

Again, when we consider the very great amount of literary work that has arisen from the social habits of men-the tavern and the coffee-house literature of one age, the club and smoking-room literature of another-we may well marvel that women manage to creep into magazines and newspapers at all. In his recent book of reminiscences, Mr. G. A. Sala describes with amusing narvetė his intense surprise at being drawn, wooed, as it were, in spite of his reluctance, into a literary career in consequence of his personal relations with Thackeray and Dickens. Again and again this honest gentleman assures us that he never suspected himself of literary talent, and was beyond measure surprised at being thought capable of writing anything readable. He literally had the profession of letters, for which, probably, mortal man was never less fitted, thrust upon him by those two great men, and that because of constant opportunities of personal intercourse impossible in the case of women.

It is sometimes maintained that because no female Dante, Virgil or Milton, Shakespere or Goethe-Homer is left out, because nineteenth century wisdom converts him into a companyhas yet appeared, that creative genius of the first order cannot reside in a female body. But this does not follow. There has, indeed, been but one Sappho, but there has only been one Burns, and he came ot a cultured peasantry. Without both learning and opportunity, Milton had been mute and inglorious, Shakespere himself fragmentary and ineffectual. It is not only that women have been denied learning, but they have also been denied leisure. Heavy domestic and social tasks have been imposed upon them from the beginning, and even in these better days very few women, though they may have nothing in the world to do from morning till night, can call one hour, or even one half-hour, in the day their own. Many women's whole lives are sacrificed to helping other people who do nothing all day long; most of those of the middle classes are supposed to live in a perpetual leisure that everyone is at liberty to invade.

But in spite of all, women have achieved great things in literature, and a grand future is before them; every day some barrier falls, and it is not impossible that, as once spinning, and once needlework, was exclusively in their hands, so may penwork chiefly be, for there are many branches of letters for which they appear to have a special native aptitude denied to men; such as story-telling and many departments of journalism. Women poets are certainly making a brave show in these days, especially in comparison with the past. None has as yet, indeed, appeared in the first class; though Christina Rossetti, Elizabeth Browning, and Jean Ingelow rank high. But among the swarm of contemporary minor poets and expectant laureates, women hold their own: such verse as that of Augusta Webster * and Mathilde Blind is not at least beneath that of any living man poet, save Mr. Swinburne. How much of the poetry of the past has been wholly or in part the offspring of female brains will never be known, for men are not scrupulons with regard to the intellectual property of women. It is known that a star, the discovery of which was claimed by, and is generally attributed to, William Herschel, was really found by his sister Caroline, during one of those frequent and pathetic escapes of hers from drudgery in his kitchen.

* Written before her death.

And when one considers the amazing amount of metrical prose perpetrated by another brother William, the ponderous nature of Wordsworth's letters and conversation, and the marvellous beauty of his sudden snatches of poetry, one is inclined to suppose that these inspired passages may be due to the poetic and impassioned sister Dorothy, who, despite her Cinderella life, was her brother's constant companion and literary counsellor, and through whose hands most of his work appears to have passed. Her letters are those of a poet; his are flat prose. Had William been the amanuensis and domestie drudge, and Dorothy the oracle whose fugitive utterances were devoutly caught and written down on the instant, one is inclined to think that the name of Wordsworth would have made a greater splendour in the heaven of English poetry, and the fervent aspiration of a contemporary on the news of Wordsworth's death, "Let us hope he had no time to finish the Excursion!" had not been uttered. Surely the lines-

> "And custom lie upon thee with a weight Heavy as frost and deep almost as life,"

may have sprung from the long-suffering Dorothy's mind. De Quincey's description of the poetic Dorothy and prosaic William is startling; the more so as De Quincey was a devout worshipper of the poet. This is Dorothy-"... Some subtle fire of impassioned intellect apparently burned within her, which, being alternately pushed forward into a conspicuous position by the irrepressible instincts of her temperament, and then immediately checked, in obedience to the decorum of her sex and age and her maidenly condition, gave to her whole demeanour and to her conversation an air of embarrassment and even of self-conflict that was almost distressing to witness"; writes the eloquent and kind-hearted De Quincey. Though, why poor wild-eyed, sensitive Dorothy should suffer all this wretchedness, and how impassioned intellect should be at variance with the decorum of any sex, or wherefore the circumstance of being unmarried should make it incumbent on a woman to speak and look like a fool, the gentlest and sweetest-hearted of men does not stop to inquire; he took it all as a matter of course, looking upon women from the standpoint of his age.

"She it was," he observes further, "that first couched his" (the poet's!) "eye for the sense of beauty," &c. "Her knowledge of literature was irregular, unsystematic...." Well, it might have been, considering that besides "pacing con-

tinually by his side through sylvan and mountain tracts," and acting as her brother's amanuensis, Dorothy is frequently discovered cooking dinners, hanging out clothes, and making alterations in the garden; doing all the manual labour, in short, while William, in lordly leisured ease, read, dropped fragments of verse at intervals from his lips for her to set down and polish, or went, as the Cumberland people told Canon Rawnsley, "booing about" the country roads. Things have changed since 1807, when De Quincey made and described Dorothy's acquaintance; it is no longer incumbent upon women, whether married or unmarried, to feign an amiable idiocy; nor do female novelists at the end of the nineteenth century hide under the table, as Miss Burney did, on being accused of literature. The De Ouincey of the present day might, indeed, find a quite opposite mode of speech and demeanour "almost distressing to witness," at times, in our literary women. It is now as unremarkable to be a woman of letters as to be a washerwoman; a female novelist is no more a monstrosity than a female charwoman; intellect and learning are not accounted an outrage on the decorum of sex, nor is a "maidenly condition" a greater hindrance to rational speech than a "bachelorly condition," and perhaps not even that sturdy misogynist and persistent detractor of her sex, Mrs. Lynn Linton, would now say that literature is anything but a fit and honourable profession for women.

Women have entered, unsummoned and nnheralded, as knights with closed visors, the great arena of the world of letters, and have there borne themselves gallantly; they will doubtless bear themselves even more gallantly in those lists in the future. Do they realise-does anyone realise-the greatness and glory of that world, the vast scope in it for good and for ill? Four mighty instruments are in the hand of man-the spade, the needle, the sword, and the pen; but the last is the greatest, because it is the directing, if not always the motive, power of the other three. For the spade feeds man, the needle clothes him, the sword rules and judges him; but the pen is the voice of his living soul, it speaks from seul to soul. To take this most potent instrument in hand is no light matter, to wield it is no ignoble task-

"Require Thou wilt

At my hand its price one day,

What the price is, who can say?"



V.-ESSEX AND NORTHUMBERLAND: WALTER BESANT.

By EDWIN LESTER ARNOLD.

THAT very graceful and charming story, " All in a Garden Fair," the history, according to its author, of three boys and a girl, is not a novel of scenery, as William Black, for instance, would understand the term, or as Thornbury, to whom the Cornish backgrounds of his dramas were as dear as the puppets who came before them. would have understood the term. Mr. Besant, I take it, was a townsman when he invented this delightful tale; his appreciation of nature is the appreciation, and his enthusiasm for callow buds, green fields, and birds-he does not venture into a very complex ornithology-is distinctly the enthusiasm of the citizen to whom these matters are things of the beyond, emblems of a holiday-land where smoke does not come, and evening papers delightful thought-are unknown. Nor does Mr. Besant's story itself, in this particular case, give him a very free hand in regard to the natural scenery of which elsewhere he has shown himself so keen an admirer. The plot conducts the three suitors for the hand of the gentle and sweetminded Claire into the great town almost at the end of the first chapter; and thereafter, for the

major portion of the book, we wander in the shabbiest kind of London; in those dim back parlours of cheap eating-houses, where the youthful poet takes his frugal meals, and the dismal respectability of Soho, a district that convention has set apart as the particular abode of the critic. It is only in the earliest pages, and again at the end, that we get a whiff of the clear Essex air; but, brief as this is. we are grateful to Mr. Besant for it. He has discovered and here dilates upon the fact that we need not go a hundred miles from the roar of the city to obtain country as fair and uncontaminated as any to be found on this side of the Solway. Once the smart of the sulphur is out of our eyes, and the hum of busy life has dropped behind, he says in effect, and it is no mean discovery, that the country opens up fresh, sparkling and restful in front; bird and beast and flower flourish; men are as simple and children as chubby as though we had wandered into some Dartmoor wilderness or lost ourselves in the wilds of an Elizabethan Surrey. Just in such a spot as this, on the southern hem of the once mighty forest of Hainault, with a sylvan wilderness at our backs,



It is a neighbourhood with a strong distinctiveness of its own. It fascinated Dickens before Mr. Besant discovered it. "Chigwell!" wrote to a friend the author of Barnaby Rudge, with a village just round the next bent of the Hainault beeches in his mind: "Chigwell, my dear fellow, is the greatest place in the world. Name your day for going. Such a delicious old inn opposite the churchyard, such a lovely ride, such beautiful forest scenery, such an out-of-the-way novel place, such a sexton! I say again, name your day." This is the very spirit of Mr. Besant's "Arcadian

Essex"; a land, as he sketches it in three or four paragraphs, of broad roads, with wide grassy margins kept open by law in the old days that sheep and cattle on their way to market

THE ARREV GATE.

might stand by when the clattering coaches passed, and neither unduly delay His Majesty's mails with their bulky carcases, nor themselves become premature beef and mutton under the lumbering wheels of the old "Rocket," or its valiant rival, the "Express," from Romford. A land of roadside ditches, where unsophisticated ducks forage amongst uncurbed growths of dock and mallow, and contented Essex swine still bask in the same sunshine that warmed their kind when Gurth was a swineherd, and the acorn-strewed dales for fifty miles around swarmed with their kindred. A land of quaint straggling villages and houses, often weather-boarded and gabled, standing well back from the road amid "a gracious amplitude of gardens," and behind fences covered with jessamine and creeping plants.

"Besides the creatures and the trees and the flowers, there is scenery," says Mr. Besant; "here and there hill-sides clothed with wood; slopes on which, as you stand upon them and look amongst the trees, the sun produces strange and wonderful effects; stretches of elastic turf; places where the forest seems to recede and still to recede as you walk along; great trees, avenues of oaks, gatherings of beeches, with ash, and elm, and sycamore; everywhere the underwood of hawthorn, honey-suckle, and wild rose; everywhere the freshness and fragrance of the wild woods; always light and colour, even in January, when the delicate purple



bloom lies upon the masses of bush and shrub, and the late leaves linger on the sheltered branches, and always silence and rest from the talk of man." This is the writer's Arcadia, a region of moss-green trees; of still, ready pools; of sunny glades; but he is too wise not to allow that sometimes it rains even in Vallambrosia. To quote Mr. Besant's heroine:—

"The forest is not always gracious," she said; sometimes it is wet and muddy; sometimes in cloudy weather it loses its colour, and in

cold east winds it loses its perfume."

"A forest is like the sea," answered Gertrude. "Its moods are many; they are never quite the same; and one never tires of it; and one is always tempted to say something about it—something which shall be new, a thing never said before. Like the sea, it satisfies; it is sympathetic; it responds to every thought."

"And yet," I said, "you would long for London and your evenings before you had

been here a month."

She laughed. "I believe I should! That is my punishment—to love nature much, but society



FISHING ON THE RODING.



high land towards Hertford and Ware in the north. It includes the valley of the Roding, that slow flowing stream of the meadow-lands where the author's heroes delight to fish in the days of their juvenescence, and the two forests—once parts of a mighty whole—Hainault and Epping lying upon either side of it. To the east there is Chipping Ongar, and to the north Waltham Abbey, a name

that must for ever stir a chord in the heart of those who love old Saxon records and the story of the last of the Saxon monarchs

who founded it. No one can say for certain whether his body was truly buried there, or whether a nameless franklin occupies the kingly tomb, while Harold found, as tradition whispers, an unhonoured grave at the hands of some charitable peasant in the sandy beaches of the English Channel. But what does it matter? Waltham Abbey

must always be Harold's fane. There is a Harold gateway to the ruined churchyard, a Harold oak of hoary age hard by, and a grove of other oaks a little further off, that may have been planted by the immediate successors of those who had the land direct from the hand of the devout but unhappy king-truly a charming and historic district from east to west, even though the soil is heavy and apt to be more miry than a poet likes in December, and though the honest country folk thereabouts are placid

as their own meditative streams—a country so full of dim historic suggestions and so unworked that, turning the leaves of

turning the leaves of this pleasant novel, and noting how well Mr. Besant knows it, one is tempted to hope that when the gifted author has exhausted the social possibilities of Belgravia and tired of Lyonesse, he may find somewhere in the same neighbourhood still another "Essex garden fair" to delight us with.

HAROLD'S BRIDGE. When Mr. Besant goes further afield, as he does, for instance, in Dorothy Forster, he comes upon scenery which, if it is without the particular charm of forest land, has excellencies all its own. It is not necessary to say anything here of this Northumberland story, full of stirring incident and of character painting, which in one or two instances, is not unworthy of Scott himself. I took the book up a little time ago, after a long interval had elapsed since my last reading of it, meaning only to turn its pages for an idle twenty minutes or so, and I read it through from end to end. I was fascinated and absorbed before I had read ten pages-drawn whether I would or not into the whirlpool of the exciting times the author tells of, following with



such sympathy and interest as only a gifted pen can insure for the characters it has given birth to,

the fortunes of the gentle Dorothy Forster, "the sweetest, the most virtuous, and the most pious of all Christian women," as a biographer wrote enthusiastically of her; of the burly laird, her brother; of the really admirable Antony Hilyard; and Lord Derwentwater, as gallant, but withal as misguided and impracticable, a revolutionist as ever got honest folk into trouble and sacrificed an empty head to the furtherance of an impossible cause.

But those who have not yet made acquaintance with this book should read it for themselves. The location of the narrative varies between the rocky shores of the wild Northumbrian coast and the Scottish Border as far north as Preston. Tom Forster has come into the possession of his heritage



in the opening chapters, amongst his holdings being the fine old keep of Bamborough Castle, and in an effective passage Mr. Besant describes how his sister Dorothy goes down one evening to see the rejoicing bonfires on the sands at the foot of the frowning precipices whereon the tower stands.

VALTHAM

"The night was clear, with never a cloud, and a bright full moon riding in the sky-yet in this season, even at midnight, it is so light that there needs no moon. The wind had dropped, and the waves, which sometimes break so high and terrible on this coast, were now little ripples which

rolled along the sand in a whisper. Above the sands the great castle stood, a grand sight to behold, its rugged walls either showing white in the moonlight, or, where in deep shadow, black and gloomy, until the

red blaze of the bonfire presently lit them up, and made them yet more awful. The sands were crowded with noisy people. In the midst stood the great pile waiting for the torch. Everybody was talking, laughing, shouting, singing. Upon the sea there lay a broad belt of white moonlight, very pretty to look upon. But then the clock struck twelve, and suddenly the fire blazed

whole of the pile, and rolled upward in vast great tongues of flame with a cracking and roaring very frightful to behold and hear. In half an hour the first fury of the flames was spent, the small branches being all burnt, and there remained only the steady burning of the big logs.

And then the young men began to leap with shouts across the fire, and the girls threw their wreaths upon it, and sang again, and again danced

When Lord Derwentwater rises for King James, and heads the futile rebellion which was to have placed him on the throne, the laird of Bamborough joins him like many another misguided gentleman, and, with the loosely knit army, well found in nothing but enthusiasm, the narrative takes us wandering away over the Northumberland fells to the green hills of the border country, picking up a hot-headed nobleman here and another there, a band of discontented peasants in one place and a score of ragged kerns at another, but drifting idly to and fro with that most ill-directed and purposeless of risings, until the end comes at last, and the gallant rebels, in whose fortunes we have by this time become so keenly absorbed, are surrounded and taken prisoners.

Mr. Besant is too busy through all this with the development of his people and the records of exciting adventure to devote much time to the accessories of the plot; he lets us take for granted

another ancient square tower. The ruins of their chapel, an old roof-

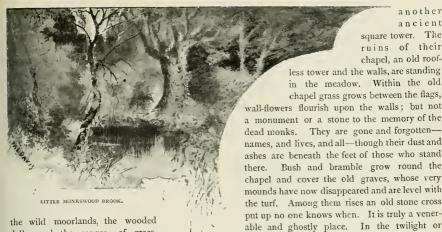
less tower and the walls, are standing in the meadow. Within the old chapel grass grows between the flags,

moonlight one may see, or think he sees, the

ghosts of the murdered friars among the ruins. In

the dark winter evenings, the people said, they

could be heard, when the wind was high, chaunting



dells, and the ranges of grasscovered hills through which King James's self-immolated supporters wander in search of a purpose. Now and then we come upon a pleasant passage, as, for instance, when the writer is describing another of the Forster manors.

"Blanckland lies along the valley of the Derwent in a deep hollow about the middle of the great

moor called Hexhamshire Common, and ten or eleven miles south of Hexham; the stream is here quite little and shallow, babbling over pebbles and under trees; it is crossed by the stout old stone bridge built by the monks themselves, who once farmed the valley. quadrangle of the old monastery, still marked by the ancient walls, has the aspect of an ancient and decayed college; a great square tower standing over the old gate has several good rooms in it, and

a second part included the refectory, a fair and noble hall with a large

kitchen below and

in the chapel; and every year, on that day when they rang the fatal bell and so called in the Scots, may be heard at midnight the ringing of a knell; and at night the venerable ghost of the CHIGWELL INN AND THE OLD CHURCH.

Abbot himself may be sometimes met upon the bridge."

All this wild border country is beautiful with a beauty lying half-way between the soft fertility of southern shires and the rugged dignity we look for, and find, in the further north. I was myself fishing in the district some months since, and have rarely trodden a country so saturated with the spirit of its own history. There is scarcely a hill-top which does not command the scene of a historic battle or two; there is hardly a bend in the peat-stained streams which string the birch coppices on a silver thread all down the green valleys that has not echoed to the slogans of Scot and Southron; every grey stone bridge has been fought for; every crumbling stronghold has a tale

to tell in its scarred and blackened face; the very names of hill and valley are startling in their significance, and the witty saying of the American tourist who had been shown over such a district rises constantly to the mind. "Well, stranger," said that friendly critic to his guide, "this England of yours is a little place, but it is mostly made up of the dust of heroes!"

In such a country as that chosen by Mr. Besant for the location of the second novel of his I have mentioned, the artist and illustrator may roam at will—the difficult question with him must be not what to sketch, but what to omit, in a land where everything is beautiful, in one fashion or another, and almost everything historic.

"NO MORE SEA."

In vision of the land whence pain has fled, Sorrow hath passed, and death has ceased to be, Was it all triumph, as the prophet said,

Amid that glory "there was no more sea"?

Here the sea sweeps 'twixt land and land. It mocks

Hearts by love's chain still linked o'er ocean's
track.

Then drives against the cruel reefs and rocks

The homeward bound, by those strong links drawn back.

What marvel, if to many a mourning heart,

Sweet seem the words that tell of "no more sea"?

Wrathful and mighty in its power to part,

Moaning in calmest hour o'er storms to be.

And yet—to watch the ocean's changeful splendour,

Bright as the gems that build the city wall, Flashing of diamond, light of emerald tender— Would we not sigh to miss it after all? Would we not miss that odour of the brine

Dearer at times than scent of summer flowers?

The music of the waves—some heart might pine

For that one sound from this lost world of ours!

I know not—but I know, if room there be, The roll of waves shall beat upon yon shore, Shall mingle with creation's voice set free, From the mysterious broken chords of yore.

But all that made the sea a word of pain,

This shall have passed for ever and for ever—
The cry of wrecks, the roaring of the main,

And tides which flow, and tides which ebb—to sever.

All these shall pass—there shall be "no more sea,"
Save as the mirror of a perfect world,
The haven where the weary soul would be,
Where the bark anchors—the white sail is furled.

MARY GORGES.

PERTHSHIRE AFTER THE GREAT GALE.

By C. F. GORDON CUMMING.

A FTER a summer of almost unparalleled sunshine and delight, 1893 passed away from us, and 1894 was ushered in, in like manner, with scarcely a vestige of cloud on all the deep blue sky, and such a flood of sunlight as was rather suggestive of the Riviera than of Britain. Truly "a green Yule," with, alas! the proverbial result of "a full kirk-yard,"

Alas! too, that between these seasons of calm loveliness there should have intervened autumnal tempests, one of which, on the night of November 17th, was of such exceeding violence that in a few brief hours it wrought more destruction than all those of many long years put together, far exceeding in its intensity the awful gale which destroyed the Tay Bridge.

Grievous beyond words was the devastation of woods and forests in the centre and eastern half of Scotland, the main fury of the hurricane having apparently stricken poor Perthshire, making pitiful havoc in its lovely woods. Of course buildings of all sorts suffered in proportion to their power of resistance, and if the tale of destruction in regard to these is less than has often been reported after Eastern cyclones, it must be attributed to the more substantial nature of our British houses. As it was, few escaped some damage; many churches, houses and stables were partially unroofed and otherwise damaged; chimney-stacks fell into houses, corn and hay-stacks were overturned, and the grain and hay blown all over the country; gates and palings were destroyed, stone walls broken in every direction by the crash of falling trees, while even heavy tombstones were blown clean out of the earth and thrown over with such violence as to be broken into several pieces. I saw about twenty thus shattered in the church-vard round the newlyrestored Cathedral of Dunblane, some having fallen in one direction, some in another, bearing silent testimony to the whirl of the tempest.

As regards these works of men's hands, their repair is simply a matter of time and of (very inconvenient) expense. But as concerns the grand trees the loss is irreparable, many thousands of the noblest patriarchs in forests, parks, and avenues, having been laid low, while many hundred thou-

sands (I suppose a couple of million would be a very low estimate) of well-grown trees of all sorts lay prone—I was going to say like a newly-reaped corn-field, but *that* would suggest order, whereas this wholesale uprooting and rending produced only bewildering confusion.

When I mention that the forester on the Kinnaird Estates in Forfarshire tells us of one plantation of 800 acres of trees a hundred years old, levelled to the ground, and reports the loss on those estates alone at 250,000 trees, and that on the Duke of Sutherland's woods in the North the loss has been estimated at half a million, broken or uprooted, we can form some idea of what the loss may be on scores of other great properties which have suffered in like degree.

I will confine myself to giving some account of the devastation wrought by this disastrous storm in the immediate neighbourhood of Crieff, which is a finely situated country town in the heart of Perthshire, overlooking the wide Strath through which flows the River Earn, and which owes much of its charm to the beauty of the neighbouring estates.

The town, now so familiar to thousands of summer visitors, stands high on the Knock, a finely wooded hill, on one side of which stands the mansion-house of Fern Tower (the property of Lord Abercromby), with a pleasant garden and a fine park. On the farther side of the latter rises the Callum, or "Columba's" Hill, where it is said that Saint Columba sat and taught the people. Doubtless in his time it was bare, but in later ages it has been clothed on one side with a grand old beech wood, while its summit was crowned with dark fir-trees.

Alas! alas! for the transformation wrought by those awful hours of raging whirlwind. And, I believe, the whole damage was done in the brief space between midnight and 3 A.M., during which time, those living near heard the almost ceaseless crash of falling timber, while the houses themselves shook before the fury of the tempest.

Now, looking from my window, I see, indeed. the comparatively young wood on the sheltered side of the hill, but not a vestige of the dark fir crown on the summit; while, of the noble beechtrees not one has escaped. Here and there the stems of some of the middle-aged trees still stand erect, like spires, with a white splintered top, and well-nigh every branch wrenched off; but all the grand giants are laid low, with their great roots towering high above our heads, and those wide-spreading branches, beneath whose shade I have so often rested, lay tossed in inextricable confusion, the whole forming an absolutely impenetrable chaos.

The same words exactly describe the pleasant garden and the wooded hill behind it. Here, happily, the grandest tree of all has escaped, but others, of all sizes, lie tossed together, and piled one above the other in inextricable confusion. (I may remark incidentally that, as an almost selfevident result, covert shooting, all over the stormswept districts, has been well-nigh impossible.) In the park, a number of the finest old limes, sycamores, and ash-trees lie uprooted, as also a considerable number of noble old beech-trees, which formed one end of a fine avenue, Happily this pleasant avenue has suffered comparatively little, though a considerable number of fir-trees at its farther end have shared the fate of their brethren on the summit of the Knock, where they lie, blown over, side by side, one overlapping the other, like a noble regiment all done to death by some irresistible foe. Here, as in so many other places, the site of the once pleasant wood is now a dense impenetrable thicket of roots, boughs, and stems, all interwoven. Those who remember the favourite walk, known as "the Cinder-path," will mourn for the total destruction of the very prominent group of picturesque old Scotch firs. Now only a few shattered stragglers remain.

Strange to say, the great hydropathic establishment, although standing so high on the Knock, altogether escaped, and its grounds were untouched by the cruel storm-fiend, which wrought such havoc in almost every garden, as though taking a malicious pleasure in uprooting the most ornamental shrubs and flowering trees.

Passing up Strathearn towards St. Fillans and Loch Earnhead, each beautiful estate reveals similar pitiful scenes of desolation. On the left hand, Strowan, the lovely home of Mr. Graham-Stirling (one of the sweetest spots in Perthshire), has lost almost all the fine old yews which formed so characteristic a feature between the house and

the beautifully wooded steep river-banks. There were about twenty of these, several hundred years of age. Many other patriarchal trees—limes, silver-fir, ash, and others—have likewise fallen, while the dark fir and larch woods on Tirleum (notable as being the highest wooded hill in Scotland) are literally laid low. At a first glance the hill still appears to be fir-clad, but on closer inspection, it is evident that all the trees are uprooted; that is to say, some five hundred acres of valuable timber have suddenly been rendered almost worthless.

Among the sufferers are a colony of herons who, for many years, have been faithful to the Clune Wood, their heronty numbering about thirty nests. Now they will have to find new quarters, for their ancestral trees are laid low. So is the wood at the back of Strowan House, wherein a great company of rooks had long established their rookery, and where they had reared their countless generations of hungry, noisy, young broods.

Returning to the immediate neighbourhood of Crieff. It is estimated that fully half of the beautiful woods of Monzie Castle are destroyed. The fine avenue of lime-trees is a thing of the past; five majestic silver-firs and one of the old historic larches have fallen. Of these six were planted when the larch was first introduced to Britain, one was blown down in the "Tay Bridge" storm; now only four remain. The lovely woods of Abercairny and Inchbrakie have likewise suffered severely, very many noble old trees having fallen. Dollerie and Cultoquhey have not escaped. At the former an important experiment has been tried, in raising an unusually large old patriarchal lime-tree, with, it is hoped, every prospect of success, these kindly trees being peculiarly amenable to such treatment.

A point of very special interest to foresters and landed proprietors is that amid this general wholesale devastation of old-established British trees, several hundred luxuriant Douglas pines in the Strathallan Castle woods have stood firm, though far overtopping the sturdy oaks, which were utterly powerless to resist the force of the tempest. It has been very generally believed that these beautiful pines, which laugh at Californian tempests, would not acclimatise sufficiently to resist a British gale. So this proof to the contrary is satisfactory.

Another interesting point is that the extreme destructiveness of the hurricane is due to its having

come from the north-east, which is very unusual in this district, most gales coming from the south-west. Consequently all the trees instinctively throw out their roots, so as best to resist a gale from that quarter; whereas this time the storm-fiend took a very unfair advantage, in approaching from the other side. Well, indeed, it was that it found the trees in most complete undress, for had they been clothed in foliage, or weighted with snow, few indeed could have withstood the assault.

And now I must tell of what has been perhaps the most lamentable of all the triumphs of the evil winds, namely, the cruel devastation of the stately avenues which lie between Crieff and Muthill and Drummond Castle (one of the many beautiful homes of the Willoughby de Eresby family, the Earl of Ancaster)—avenues of truly noble old trees, many numbering certainly five hundred or six hundred years of age, the delight alike of residents and visitors. These have been stricken most capriciously, for here and there twenty or thirty have been uprooted, all near together, and then for a space all have escaped.

At one point, called the Balloch Slap, the road was overshadowed by beautiful old Spanish chestnuts, whose rich dark foliage was a joy to the eye. Of these many were shattered and split right in half, or else huge arms were torn off, leaving the soft white wood hanging all in tatters. One could not look at them without pain and a conviction that they were suffering; but the majority were uprooted, and lay right across the road, which was all torn up by the upheaval of the huge roots. A rocky ridge close by had been crowned with wellgrown Scotch firs, but these had shared the same fate, as did also many stately beeches and plane-trees, standing singly in the park, many of them having a girth of 15 to 16 feet at about four feet from the ground. But (to return to the beautifully overshadowed high road) perhaps the saddest detail there was the havoc among the beautiful limetrees, so fragrant and so dear to the busy bees on hot summer days. Alas! there they lay, all twisted and shattered-never to rise again.

But the most heart-breaking scene of devastation awaited us within the beautiful park of Drummond Castle, which is approached by a narrow but very long and exceedingly picturesque avenue, chiefly of majestic old beeches, oaks, and elms. Another older avenue, chiefly of Spanish chestnuts, runs

parallel to it for some distance. I was told that in these avenues about three hundred trees had fallen. As to numbers, I cannot speak; I only know that, being on foot, instead of turning aside into the open park, we determined, if possible, to scramble along the road from the Lodge to the Castle, returning by the open ground, and to do this involved three hours of hard toil, climbing over or under the fallen trees, or rounding their towering roots, or else climbing with great difficulty along the rocky ridge, now totally blocked with heavy timber and an impenetrable thicket of boughs, so that the road lay, as it were, in a tunnel.

Even along the level, every here and there, six or eight giants lay right across the road, which here more than anywhere else was so rent by the upheaval of the roots, that only a narrow strip remained intact, between pits seven or eight feet deep, and measuring perhaps twenty feet across, the roots towering to a corresponding height.

Hitherto Drummond Park has gloried in the possession of a group of silver-firs, so stately and so great that they might almost have been transported from one of those Californian forests; but now, alas! they are a memory of the past, only one remaining, and that, much the smallest, being only about nine feet in girth: it has suffered grievously, nearly all its branches on the north side, having been torn Till recently Scotland owned three such groups; namely, this one, and those at Inverawe, or Loch Awe, and at Roseneath on the Clyde. Those at Inverawe fell in the Tay Bridge storm, those at Drummond have followed suit. Now only those at Roseneath survive. Long may they abide! Happily the woods on our western coasts were scarcely touched by the present gale.

Perhaps the most lamentable detail of all is the total destruction of all, save one, of the magnificent cedars of Lebanon, which, rooted in the crevices of the mighty rock, of which the ancient castle seems to form a natural part, have for centuries held their ground against all storms and tempests.

Amid this wholesale massacre of our beautiful tree-friends, it was a matter for thankful surprise that so very few casualties to human beings should have occurred. This, of course, was due to the hour at which the hurricane occurred, when almost every one was in bed, or at least indoors, so that almost the only sufferers were those injured by the fall of their own chimney-stacks.



THE STORY OF A DELIVERANCE.

By Alfred J. Church.

I.—ARCHIAS OF SYRACUSE TO DEMONICUS OF ATHENS, PROSPERITY.

(Written in the first of the 109th Olympiad. B.C. 344.)

AVE you not sometimes thought, dear fellowpupil, that I have been forgetful of our friendship? Verily you had reason for so believing, seeing that now for three years you have received from me neither message nor letter. Hear now the cause both of my silence and of my ceasing to be silent. I wrote nothing because there was nothing good to write. Syracuse has suffered many things, and each thing has been worse than that which went before. After Dion was slain, tyrant came after tyrant; every one of them made fair promises, "Trust me"-each said the same thing in different words-"trust me with power, and when the proper time shall have come, then I will hand over Syracuse to the Syracusans, a free city to be ruled by free men." But the proper time came not. This I, with others, endured: hoping continually against hope. But when Dionysius himself returned, having gained possession of the city by treachery, then there was an end of my patience. It is never easy to live under the rule of a tyrant, even though he have something of virtue and benevolence. But to be the slave of this drunken and profligate buffoon, was not to be endured for a moment; nor, indeed, could I have tarried with safety, even if I had been willing. This Dionysius, fool though he be, has yet wit enough to learn and put in practice the lesson which Thrasybulus of Miletus taught to Periander of Corinth*, and I, though not otherwise distin-

* "Periander," says Herodotus (v. 92 § 6), "was at the first of milder temper than his father, but after he had communicated by letter with Thrasybulus of Miletus, became far more savage. He sent a message to ask how he might guished, must needs have some honour in the city, seeing that I am descended from its founder, and bear his name. I fled, therefore, not as did most of my friends to some refuge in Sicily, but to Corinth. This is a free city, whereas all the towns in Sicily are ruled by tyrants, less abominable, it is true, than Dionysius, but, nevertheless, enemies of true liberty.

So far, then, there was nothing which I could write or you read with pleasure. But now there is a hope of better things, as I will proceed to relate.

Four days since, I encountered in the marketplace two friends, citizens of Syracuse, and exiles for the same cause which has banished me. Knowing that I was like-minded with them, they made me aware of their errand, which, put briefly, was this-to ask the help of the Corinthians in driving out Dionysius. This villain has filled up to overflowing the cup of his iniquities, so that even the populace, which, for the most part, is not ill disposed to a tyrant, is ready to rise against him. To their request the magistrates made this answer: "There is but one man in this city who can serve you to any good purpose; his name is Timoleon; persuade him to take up your cause, and though we cannot give you assistance on the public account, yet we will not hinder you." All of them added promises of such private help as might be possible. Now to say, "Timoleon only can serve you," seemed at first the same as to say, "you have come on a vain errand." For this man, for twenty years past, though of the first best and most safely rule the city. Thrasybulus took the

best and most safely rule the city. Intraspulus took the man into a corn-field outside the city, and cut down the tallest of the ears as he walked through it, questioning him of his coming, tut saying nought else." Periander understood the lesson, and proceeded to destroy the chief intrigues of Corinth.

rank in the city, has taken no part in public affairs, but shutting himself up in his own house, has shunned all speech and sight of his fellow-citizens. The cause of his seclusion is this. He had a brother, Timophanes by name, who served the city well in a certain war that was waged with Argos. The Argives were defeated, but since they watched for an opportunity of revenge, it was deemed expedient to hire, at the public expense, a company of soldiers who should always be ready for service. Of this company, Arcadians and men of Elis for the most part, Timophanes was made captain. After a while the thought occurred to him that by their help he might make himself master of the State, and enjoy the tyranny. Being, however, strongly bound by fraternal affection to his brother, Timoleon, and judging that one so highly esteemed in Corinth would be a profitable associate, he communicated the whole matter to him, offering him a half share of the power and of all other good things which he hoped to acquire. But Timoleon, being a just man and a lover of freedom, greatly disliked this plan, and sought by all means to dissuade his brother from it. Finding at last that all arguments and entreatiesfor he used both to the uttermost-were in vain, he resolved on a dreadful deed, even to slay his brother. How he slew him is not known for certain. That he struck him down in the open market-place, as some say, is manifestly untrue, for of such a deed there must have been many witnesses. But between those who declare that he stabbed him with his own hand, and others who affirm that the deed was done by others, Timoleon standing near, but with face turned away, cannot be determined. Be this as it may, from that time he lived alone as a man under a curse. Vainly had my friends sought to have speech with him. He never went abroad into the streets, and the porter at the door was strictly ordered to admit no one. When I heard this, the thought came to me, by some divine chance, as it seems, that I would see him by stealth. And this I contrived to do. There is a garden, surrounded on every side by high walls, in which he was wont to take the air. Into this I climbed, not without difficulty, for it was most strongly defended by spikes and other like things, and hiding myself among the bushes, waited till he should come. Then I suddenly stood before him, and, without giving him time to speak, said with a loud voice: "I am Archias of Syracuse, I bear a message to Timoleon of Corinth." This I said for a reason that I had, namely, that Timoleon is of the race of Archias. and is known to honour his ancestor greatly, having built a chapel to him in Corinth, and adorned the chapel that is at Syracuse, with many splendid gifts. "Speak," he said, "for you are not come unexpected." Then I told him the whole story. When I had finished, he said, "The gods have warned me of this in a dream. Last night, as I slept, I seemed to see Archias standing by my bedside. He laid his hand upon my head, and said: 'I have a work for thee to do; go when thou art called; for Zeus and Apollo provide, thee this escape from the furies of thy brother.' It was an old man that I saw, but you are strangely like to him." "So they have often said in Syracuse," I answered, "and, indeed, I am of his race." "So I judged," he said. "Welcome, kinsman, the gods have indeed answered my prayers."

You should have seen the tumult of joy that prevailed in Corinth when it was noised abroad that Timoleon had come forth from his retirement, and was about to deliver Syracuse from its oppressor. 'Twas as if a god had descended in visible shape into the city. The whole youth was ready to volunteer for service with him. might have enrolled in the space of a day five thousand men, had he been willing to take so many. But that is impossible. He can have but ten ships and no more; nor will even these pass from here thither without some difficulty and danger. Not only are the ships of Dionysius to be avoided, but the Carthaginians also will do their worst to hinder us. But the thing has not gone so far without the help and inspiration of the gods, and I am persuaded that they will help us.

II.-THE SAME TO THE SAME.

(Written in the second year of the 110th Olympiad, B.C. 339.)

Verily we have reached the haven where we would be, and are, at peace; but it is after such buffeting from winds and waves as almost passes belief. 'Tis five years and more since I first wrote to you the news how the noble Timoleon had undertaken the deliverance of Syracuse. My letters have set forth from time to time the many noble deeds by which he has set forward this end; overcoming, not without manifest favours of the gods, great and various dangers to the few Greeks and barbarians. Now, thanks to Zeus the Saviour,

and Athené of Good Counsel, the worst and, I trust, the last peril has been overcome. Hear now the story of what has happened since I last wrote.

That the Carthaginians were ill-content with the doings of our noble leader, I have said more than once, and, indeed, you had known it without my telling. These barbarians are persuaded that they have a right to this island of Sicily, which right they have asserted many times during the last two hundred years, and have more than once come very near to establishing it. Again and again has Timoleon over-reached them in council, and driven them back by arms, yet they did not relinquish their purpose, but, on the contrary, put forth all their strength to accomplish it. Our chief was not ignorant of this, for though he attributes all his successes to Good Fortune,* he uses all means that skill and prudence can suggest in the attaining of them. But that the enemy was about to come with a force so overwhelming, neither he nor any man knew. Two hundred ships of war they had, and a thousand transports laden with soldiers and all the ammunitions of war, arms, artillery, and the like, and seventy thousand men. This was the number named by those who estimated the matter most soberly; there were some who doubled or even trebled it. Such panic as prevailed in Syracuse when tidings came that this vast armament was within sight of Lillybæum, | had never been seen. My countrymen lack not courage, nor has there ever been a leader whom they have trusted more, or had better reason for trusting, than the noble Timoleon. Yet, when he declared in the Assembly that he should go forth and meet the enemy, the multitude cried out almost with one voice: "He is mad!" Scarce three thousand men were found to follow him. These were citizen soldiers; the mercenaries were as many, for of the four thousand that were on the rolls a fourth part slunk away for fear as we marched. "'Tis well they are gone," said Timoleon; "now I know whom I can trust." On our way we were joined by certain Corinthian soldiers and others, so that we had at the last some eleven thousand men. Near the end of our march, when we were mounting the hill from which we should see the army of the enemy, there met us some mules carrying loads of parsley. Our men thought it an omen of evil,

because 'tis the custom in Sicily to put a chaplet of parsley on a grave. "Nay," cried our chief, "they are bringing us our crowns before we have fought"; for, as you know, who have yourself won a prize at the Isthmus, we give a crown of parsley to the victors. So saying, he put a wreath of the herb round his own head, and gave others to his companions. When we reached the hill-top we could see nothing, for the mist covered all the plain below. Only there came up a great noise of chariot wheels grinding on stone and gravel, and clanging of arms, and shouting of men. To hear such an uproar and to see nothing was a thing to trouble even a stout heart. I have been in many battles, and have borne myself, I trust, with decent courage, but for a moment my spirit grew faint; nor was I alone in this, if I may judge from pale faces that I saw about me. Truly it was well that this obscurity lasted for but a brief space. Very soon, a light wind springing up, the mist rolled away, and the whole plain lay clearly to be seen before us. The army of the enemy was at that moment crossing the river—Crimessus they call it, a petty stream, but sometimes swollen by rain to a great torrent. In front were the four-horse chariots, which had already made the passage; behind these was a great battalion of infantry, splendidly armed and carrying great white shields; we judged them to be some ten thousand in number. I knew them to be Carthaginian citizens. For the most part this people fight their battles with hired soldiers, but for this war they had levied a force of their own. These men of the white shields were partly on the nearer side of the river, partly yet crossing, and behind them came, with much pressing and crowding, a mixed mass of mercenaries, mostly Africans, brown and black. Our chief, without delay, for delay at such a time is apt to impair the courage, gave us the signal to charge. The cavalry, outstripping the rest by their speed, fell upon the chariots; on them, indeed, they made but small impression. Timoleon, therefore, bade them ride on, and deliver their charge on the extreme right of the enemy's array, where the chariots were not. The infantry he himself led to the attack, shouting with a voice which seemed-so loud and clear was it-to be of a god rather than of a man. The men of Carthage bore themselves right bravely; nor was it easy to strike them down, so guarded were they by breastplates of iron and helmets of brass, and the great

^{*} Plutarch tells us that Timoleon dedicated a chapel in his own dwelling to this power.

[†] The westernmost promontory of the island.

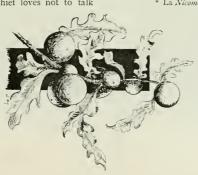
white shields that covered their whole bodies. Good swordsmen also they were, but in this respect scarcely equal to us. Yet I doubt whether we should have broken through their array but for what I believe to have been the manifest help of the gods. Suddenly there came down from the hills upon the plain such a storm of rain and hail, with thunder and lightning, as I have never before seen. Us it troubled not, for it came from behind; but it smote the barbarians full in the face, blinding them so that they could not see either where to step or where to strike, and deafening them so that they could not hear the word of command. And now the weight of their arms and armour began to tell against them. For Crimessus, which in the morning flowed with a moderate stream, by noonday became a raging torrent. 'Twas hard for men so laden to stand; to move was well-nigh impossible. I myself saw many men perish in the water without any stroke from an enemy's sword or spear. He who fell was lost beyond hope; in a moment he was trampled under foot, for the bed of the river was filled with men beside themselves with fear, and, their array once broken, no more resisting our attack than the ox resists the slaughterman. Some, indeed, of the Carthaginians, and the greater part of the mercenaries, had not entered the river. Among these the slaughter was not so great, yet these also suffered much from the hands of our cavalry. These barbarians lose heart more utterly than do the Greeks, and will suffer themselves to be slaughtered by men fewer in number and not more skilful in arms.

The next day Timoleon ordered that the total of the slain should be taken. I have not as yet heard the number. Our chief loves not to talk

much about his deeds, saying that Fortune is apt to desert those who brag of her favours. But if I may judge from the spoils that were gathered on the field, the multitude of the dead was very great. Every man was well laden with booty, not of bronze or iron, for of these they took no heed, but of gold and silver. And over and above these private gains, there was a huge treasure collected for the public treasury. As for the prisoners, I reckoned them myself, as they marched, guarded by horsemen, along the road to Syracuse. They were arrayed in ranks of ten, and I counted of such ranks more than five hundred. "Tis certain that the power of Carthage is broken for many years to come by yesterday's battle.

Remember you, dear Demonicus, how our fellowstudent, Aristoteles, was wont to maintain that the spirits of the dead are not wholly without knowledge of that which befalls friends and descendants? That they are so concerned with such things as to receive either happiness or unhappiness from them, he did not affirm, but he judged it an inhuman thing that they should be wholly indifferent to the fortunes of those whom, while they where yet alive, they greatly regarded.* If this be true, does not our dear master Plato feel a certain pleasure in these events? You know how much he concerned himself with the happiness of this city, and what grievous disappointment he met with. Did he not see Dion slain, who might have ruled it wisely and well? Did he not find that he had laboured in vain to turn the heart of Dionvsius to virtue? But now the gods have ordered things as he would have had them, for the noble Timoleon is as wise in council as he is valiant in battle.

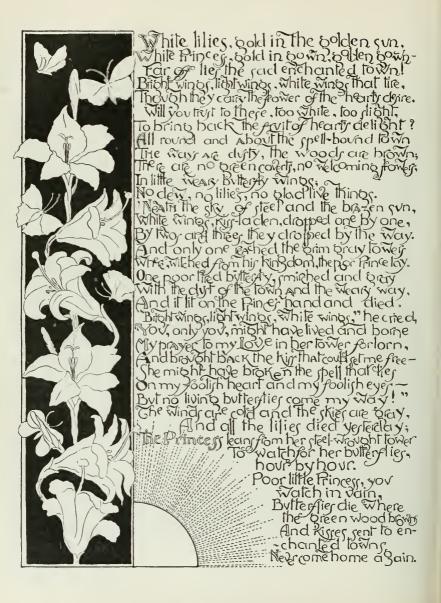
* La Nicomachear Ethics, i. x.



The Lett Charge

The lilies lean to the while while while while rose, The while rose, to the blossomed hees of his established he aprile when he aprile the Sommer's the Sommer's take.







Aufumn: a Dirge.

Words by SHELLEY.

Music by J. St. ANTHONY JOHNSON.









CHAPTER XIV .- continued.

THE theatre was one blaze of light and colour. The crystal chandeliers; the gaudy tints and profuse gilding; the gay dresses and glittering jewels of the fair occupants of the front rows and boxes; the white sea of faces that seemed to rise on waves from basement to ceiling—all combined to form a scene quite unparalleled in Mary's experience. From the box they occupied near the stage, she had a good opportunity of watching the rapidly filling house, throughout which ran a constant murmur of subdued excitment, especially in the upper galleries, where people were struggling for places.

Presently a loud burst of music from the orchestra recalled the attention of everyone to the stage. In the glare of the footlights the dark baize curtain undulated fitfully, as if restless to disclose the mysteries it concealed; and occasionally, during intervals in the music, sounds issued from behind it betokening preparations not yet complete.

But now the music had ceased, and, to the tinkle of a bell, the mysterious curtain reefed itself up till it became invisible, and disclosed what to Mary Errol was a piece of enchanting magic. She saw the interior of an ancient palace, with a certain rude grandeur about it, and a throne under a canopy, which was guarded by soldiers. Then, amid a fanfare of trumpets, there entered the aged king himself, his white hair flowing from beneath his crown, and a group of men and women in antique costumes, representing the princes and nobles of his train. They gathered round him as he seated himself on the throne, and announced his purpose of dividing his kingdom between his three daughters, reserving the largest portion for her who loved him most. Mary scarcely heard his words, until he said :-

"Tell me, my daughters (Since now we will divest us, both of rule, Interest of territory, cares of state), Which of you, shall we say, doth love us most? That we our largest bounty may extend Where nature doth with merit challenge. Goneril, our eldest born, speak first."

Then followed the specious protestations of affection on the part of the two false-hearted sisters, who, as they successively knelt before their fond old father, vied with each other in their exaggerated expressions.

But, while they were speaking, a wondrous voice with a thrilling cadence in its tones, said:—

" What shall Cordelia do? Love, and be silent."

As if the accents of that voice had electrified them, all bent their gaze on the speaker, while an involuntary hush fell upon them as they gazed on the beautiful creature on the stage.

Kenneth Errol, who was seated beside Ada in the front of the box, along with Sir Edward Douglas, leaned forward and gazed intently. Mary, who sat behind with Jessy and her brother, felt her arm seized spasmodically by the former, who exclaimed in an awed whisper: "Oh, do look, Mary! Did you ever see such an exquisitely lovely girl?" And Mary, following the direction of her companion's eyes, beheld the very embodiment of her conception of Cordelia.

Standing somewhat apart from the rest, with hands meekly clasped, and eyes raised in sorrowful appeal, the owner of the syren voice appeared. Her form, graceful as that of a Grecian statue in its faultless symmetry, was clad in loose robes of white edged with gold, whose folds and artistic mode of adjustment harmonised well with

the queenly bearing of the wearer. Her hair, raven black in hue, was coiled round a small, shapely head, and confined by a golden arrow. The countenance was one of extreme beauty; the classic regularity of the features according well with the peerless form. It was of that rare oval contour so beautiful in woman. Every feature was alive with expression; but there was a nameless power in those black eyes of burning lustre, potent alike to melt or awe the human heart. And the voice, what language can convey any idea of its subtle spell? It was a voice which in its day could stir the hearts of thousands; a voice whose echoes continued to haunt the ears that once had listened to it long after death had silenced its marvellous tones. In it grief, despair, irony, anger or scorn found each its faithful interpretation; while, with equal fidelity, it could breathe of love, compassion, mirth or tenderness, eliciting, whatever its key, a response as real as if reality had inspired its utter-

As she knelt to deprecate her father's anger, every action mutely eloquent, then bowed her head beneath his withering denunciation, she commanded the sympathy of every beholder. The look of piteous entreaty with which she received his malediction was such as an artist would have loved to portray. But the powerfulness of her acting revealed itself most in the transition from imploring agony to queenly dignity, as she took leave of her sisters in these words:—

"Ye jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes
Cordelia leaves you: I know you what you are;
And, like a sister, am most loath to call
Your faults as they are nam'd. Love well our father:
To your professed bosoms I commit him:
But yet, alas! stood I within his grace,
I would prefer him to a better place.
So, farewell to you both."

A loud burst of applause followed her exit from the stage, which was only arrested by the beginning of a new scene.

All this while Kenneth had been gazing as if entranced, oblivious of everything but the stage. The resounding cheers recalled him to consciousness of those beside him, and, turning round, he encountered Ada's soft, gentle eyes regarding him with a sort of timid scrutiny. He smiled, and begged to be excused for his abandonment to the fascination of the scene. He moved closer to her

as he spoke, and whispered a few words in her ear that brought the colour in a quick flush to her cheek. She looked up in his face with the old smile of confiding, adoring love for a moment, then turned round to see how the others had enjoyed the play.

They seemed to be discussing it with great enthusiasm; especially Jessy, whose face was all aglow, as she turned from one to another with eager gestures expressive of her admiration. Mary's face wore an expression very different from its usual placidity. She was evidently excited in no small degree, though her manner remained as composed as ever.

All eyes were again directed to the stage, however, on which the pageant of the play had reappeared. Scene after scene passed before them, disclosing the ingratitude of King Lear's daughters, and their final rejection of him from those very dominions that were the gift of his foolish bounty, until at last the old man is discovered exposed by their unnatural cruelty to the pitiless storm on the heath. All are familiar with that matchless picture of human woe—a picture which reveals, as the great interpreter of nature alone could reveal it, the poignant grief of a heart whose trust has been betrayed.

When, however, the curtain rose on that exquisitely touching scene representing the sleeping Lear, after he has been rescued by his outcast daughter, lying in the tent, and watched over by her loving care, the interest of the spectators became intense. There was an indescribable pathos in both looks and gesture as she bent above the unconscious form and scanned the altered features. She stooped and kissed his brow, withdrawing slightly as he stirred in his sleep, then, turning to Kent and the physician beside her, spoke those thrilling words as few have ever spoken them:—

"Was this a face

To be expos'd against the warring winds? To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder? In the most terrible and nimble stroke Of quick, cross lightning? to watch (poor perdu!) With this thin helm? Mine enemy's dog, Though he had bit me, should have stood that night Against my fire; and wast thou fain, poor father, To hovel thee with swine, and rogues forlorn, In short and musty straw? Alack, alack! 'Tis wonder that thy life and wits at once Had not concluded all."

Then, when at last the sleeper awoke, and she implored,—

"O, look upon me, sir,
And hold your hands in benediction o'er me:
No. sir, you must not kneel."

her voice had a tenderness that drew tears from many eyes, proving how completely she had assimilated herself with the character she was personating. Gazing at her, the audience forgot the actress, and saw only the true-hearted, loving daughter, whose heart bled for the suffering of her dishonoured and distracted sire, and yearned over him with all the intensity of an affection which his previous unkindness had failed to destroy. Every breath was hushed as she gently guided the tottering steps of the old man, who, still dazed and distraught, leant upon her arm, and they slowly passed from the scene.

But the tragedy darkened as it reached its terrible culmination, the excitement of the spectators increasing every moment. There was a hushed stillness among them as with bated breath they watched the approach of the final catastrophe; and when at last Lear came upon the stage, bearing in his arms the dead Cordelia, and burst into that heart-rending lamentation which few can even read without tears, a murmur of sympathetic horror broke from them, as though the scene before them were reality. They almost rose to their feet in response to the piteous appeal,—

"Do you see this? Look on her,—look,—her lips,—Look there, look there!"

That cry of anguish left them no ears for the few concluding words of the play; they were still hearing it when, amid the solemn music of a dead march, the dark curtain descended, and the vision was gone.

A hush of silence prevailed for a few moments while the audience awoke from the spell which had held them captive during the play; then their enthusiasm broke forth in a perfect acclamation, which nothing could silence, until King Lear himself stepped out before the curtain, leading by the hand the fair Cordelia. Her appearance elicited thunders of applause, and bouquet after bouquet was showered at her feet. She acknowledged the tribute most gracefully, and, withal, modestly; but it was apparent that the exertion she had undergone had left her much exhausted, for she passed to the other side of the stage with a languid step, and,

with a final curtsy to the enraptured people, vanished from their view.

Mary Errol had followed her with a gaze of mingled admiration and awe, until she neared the other side of the stage, when a bouquet of special splendour was thrown at her feet. Mere curiosity caused Mary to glance up in the direction whence it had come; and for one instant she caught a glimpse of the dark face of Norman Lesly, who immediately afterwards retired behind the drapery of the box he occupied.

Involuntarily she turned to see if Kenneth had observed him; but Kenneth's eyes were riveted on the disappearing form of the fair enchantress, and he seemed oblivious of everything else, until Harry recalled him to present realities by asking: "Prithee, Kenneth, has Cordelia bewitched you?" He started slightly, then turned with a smile to offer his services to Ada, who was adjusting her cloak beside him.

"Have you enjoyed the play?" he inquired.

"I hardly know," she replied; "it seemed, at times, so like reality that I was quite overpowered, especially towards the end. I should not care to see that tragedy again."

"But is she not a wonderful actress?"

"Yes; she seemed to realise it all herself: she could not have acted so well otherwise. I suppose she is considered the greatest actress of her day?"

"Yes; but she has not reached the acmë of her fame yet: she is very young—only twenty-two—and she has only been about two years before the footlights."

"Well, strange to say, I do not envy her; her life seems to me one of such fierce excitement, that it cannot be really happy. I think the reaction after such performances as this to-night must be intensely painful: ordinary life must seem utterly devoid of interest. But here is Alary, looking as if she shared my views. I must ask her how she has enjoyed her first visit to the play."

Mary had been assisting Jessy to don her wraps, and was now waiting with her at the door of the box, Harry having gone to enquire if the carriage were arrived below. When accosted by Ada with the question referred to, she shook her head with a grave smile, saying: "Ah, you must wait until to-morrow for my answer."

The carriage was in waiting, Harry now announced, and they followed him through the

rapidly emptying passages to the entrance, where several groups still lingered.

When they arrived at the inn, the riders were not yet in sight, and Sir Edward was growing impatient, when his son cantered up, and motioned to them to put down the window.

"Where is Kenneth?" inquired the baronet.

"Just at hand," was the answer. "He is speaking to some of our Glenathole friends who have been over to see the play. Lesly is going to ride back with us. Here they come. Some of the actors have taken up their quarters in the inn, and Lesly was treating them to a glass or two of something hot when we went in. Let Roger drive on; we'll follow."

Without waiting for an answer, he wheeled round his horse, and joined the other two riders in the wake of the carriage.

The exhaustion consequent on excitement kept all its inmates silent as they rolled on through the darkness. Even Jessy, after the first mile or two, ceased to chatter, and finally laid her head against Mary's shoulder as a convenient pillow to repose on. Ada, though still and motionless, kept listening for the clank of hoofs behind them, which made themselves heard whenever the carriage moved at a slacker pace and the wind fell a little.

Once or twice a riding whip tapped at the window, and Harry's voice cheerily inquired how they all were, laughing at the sleepy tones in which they answered him.

What strange fancies came into Mary's mind as she sat listening to the monotonous clatter of the horses' hoofs in the rear, it were hard to tell; but, to the last day of her life, that sound had for her associations that made her shudder. It was a relief when at last the carriage drew up at the foot of the hill on which stood Cliff Cottage, and she prepared to alight.

Kenneth had dismounted, and resigned his horse to Harry, who stood between it and his own, holding them by the bridle. But the third horseman was gone.

Mary remarked the circumstance, but she was resolved, for this night at least, not to speak of it to her brother.

The deluging rain made prolonged adieux impossible, so she bade her friends a hasty goodnight, and turned to take Kenneth's arm up the hill. The carriage rolled away into darkness, followed by Harry with his two prancing steeds.

"Well, old Puritan," said Kenneth as they stepped into the cosy parlour, in which Betsy's toresight had kept a good fire burning, "what did you think of the play?"

"I am too tired to speak of it to-night," she replied, throwing off her shawl, and preparing to go upstairs to her room; "but I will say this at least, since you ask me: I am glad I went with you to-night, because it has opened my eyes to the fascination—the dangerous fascination—of the stage; and if I live to be an old woman, I will never enter a theatre again."

"Mary!" exclaimed her brother, pausing abruptly, in the act of drawing off his soaking great-coat, and directing a glance of wondering incredulity to her face, "Is it possible? After what you saw to-night? I don't envy your insensibility."

"You misunderstand me, Kenneth," she rejoined calmly. "I am not insensible any more than you, but there is a power to enthral the senses in scenes such as we saw to-night that convinces me the theatre is a dangerous place. I will tell you my reasons more fully to-morrow; it is too late now. Good-night. Come upstairs as quietly as you can, so as not to disturb mother. Betsy will put your clothes to rights if you leave them here. Give me your coat; I will spread it before the fire to dry. Now don't sit any longer; you will catch cold. Good-night, Kenneth."

"Good-night, little Puritan. You don't object to a kiss do you? There! I'll follow immediately," said he.

But he sat dreaming by the fire till its blaze died out and the clock in the hall struck three.

CHAPTER XV.

HARRY'S DISAPPOINTMENT.

NEXT morning Mary awoke with a depressing headache, nearly an hour past her usual time for getting up. But on going downstairs she found that Kenneth had not yet made his appearance. Of course, Ronald had breakfasted punctual to the minute, and was gone. Mrs. Errol was waiting for them, and had ordered some fresh coffee to be made.

She looked up on Mary's entrance, and, noting the serious expression of her face, said:

"Weel, Mary, was I right?"

"Yes, mother; perfectly right. I have paid my first and last visit to the theatre," she answered.

"Ah, I thought sae. It's no a place for ony that set store by their safety, either for this world or the next. I fain would see your brither o' your persuasion. Surely you were vera late last nicht?"

"Yes, very late. No wonder Kenneth has not been able to get up as usual. I'll run upstairs and knock at his door."

But another half-hour elapsed ere he joined them, looking, in spite of his banter, very tired indeed.

When he saw his sister's grave face, he burst out a-laughing, and assured his mother no one had enjoyed the play more than Mary, although she disclaimed it now, and that he was confident she would require very little coaxing to repeat the dissipation.

"No, indeed," dissented Mary. "I will never be induced to go again. I was fascinated and horrified at the same time with what I saw; but once aware of danger, you know I don't put myself in its way. And I would advise you to forswear the theatre."

Before he went away, however, she told him she had seen Mr. Lesly in the theatre, and that he had thrown one of the bouquets at Cordelia's feet. Kenneth expressed no surprise as to the first part of her announcement, but he seemed a little startled at the second. Only for an instant, however, for he straightway declared Lesly was extravagantly fond of good acting, and as extravagant in his ways of showing his appreciation of it. Then, with a gay, careless smile, he bade her good-morning and disappeared in the mist.

Not long after his departure, a servant brought a note from Douglas Castle for Miss Errol. It proved to be an urgent message that she would spend the afternoon with Ada, who wished particularly to see her. A postscript added that she expected to see Kenneth, too.

Mary wrote a hasty answer, saying she would come, with which she despatched the messenger.

She had intended to walk to the Castle; but the rain continued to fall so heavily that, at her mother's suggestion, she delayed her visit till Kenneth's return, when they could drive over together.

Fortunately he came home rather earlier than

usual, and seemed impatient to have tea as soon as possible. Mary, supposing he had received a private communication later in the day from Ada, asked him when he would be ready to start for the Castle.

He stopped in the act of counting some money in his purse, and regarded her almost crossly as he answered: "I was not going to the Castle tonight; I had arranged to pay another visit to the theatre to see "Othello." Who sent the invitation?"

Mary showed him Ada's note, which he read twice before returning it to her. Then, restoring the purse to his pocket, he said he would accompany her without delay.

A conveyance was procured from the village, and they set off through the darkness and the rain.

They had not proceeded far, however, when they met a carriage coming in the opposite direction. It stopped, and Harry Douglas sprang out of it.

"You must let me drive you over," he said. "The carriage would have been sent two hours ago, only Jessy forgot to order it, and I have been from home till now. Step in, please; the man can take the chaise back again."

He seemed to take everything for granted; and they were soon rattling on at a brisk pace, while he talked incessantly all the way of last night's performance at the theatre.

"After all, however," he concluded, "one enjoys it more when you don't get a peep behind the scenes, as we did last night, Kenneth. I don't know how you felt, but I confess it was a woful disenchantment to me to see Lear himself and his royal company swigging off glasses of steaming punch at the bar. Between ourselves, Kenneth, it struck me as something less than generous in Lesly to treat them in that way. Some of the poor wretches looked more in need of a good supper; and everyone knows they patronise Bacchus more than is good for them."

Mary observed a nervous movement in the arm next her as her brother heard these words; and his reply seemed to indicate that he did not much appreciate them.

Harry evidently perceived this, for he at once said:

"No offence, Kenneth. I know you and he are intimate; but, to be frank with you, he doesn't take my fancy. I like a man who has courage to speak out his own opinions, be they right or

wrong: not a mere echo of everything that's said to him."

"He is a very good fellow on the whole," protested Kenneth. "A little too ready to conciliate, perhaps; but that does not imply insincerity, I hope?"

and nay are not independent enough for me. However, I shouldn't forget he is a friend of yours. Excuse my blunt way of speaking, Kenneth; you know me well enough by this time not to be offended, I think. Here we are at last, and I'm sure you will be glad to get beside a good fire, Mary, after this dismal ride."

He sprang out and assisted her to alight, Kenneth following.

In the hall Jessy met them, while Ada came out from the dining-room, smiling her welcome, and took Mary to her own room upstairs, Jessy accompanying, of course.

They both helped to divest their visitor of her cloak and bonnet, after which a chair was placed for her before the bright fire, and, one on either side of her, they proceeded to tell why they had sent for her on this wet afternoon.

Mary, whose eye had been arrested by one or two half-filled trunks beside an open wardrobe, was in a measure prepared for the news they had to tell; and when she scanned Ada's face, she descried marks of disappointment, which still further induced her to believe it was not of an agreeable nature.

"When we came home last night," Ada began, "I found a letter awaiting me from Aunt Joan. She has been ill lately, and wishes me to accompany her on a short visit to the South of France. You know she has always been so very kind to me that I could not refuse; and besides, both papa and mamma wish me to go, especially as I have never yet been across the Channel. But yet I am very unwilling to leave home—far more unwilling than I can tell you."

She bent down and toyed with the chains of her bracelet, but Mary could see a shadow on her face.

"And only fancy," cried Jessy, swinging herself forward on the rocking-chair, so as to possess herself of Mary's hands, "she has to leave almost on a day's notice—next Thursday, isn't it, Ada?"

"Yes."

"I shouldn't have minded it, of course," pursued Jessy, "not being on the eve of matrimony."

"Jessy!"

"Well, it's quite true. In fact, I only wish Aunt Joan had asked me to go instead of Ada; but, you see, I'm too much of a romp, I suppose."

Mary grew serious, and appeared to be going through a train of thought as she listened to the intelligence; but presently she brightened up, and said:

"It won't be for very long, Ada; and perhaps you will enjoy your stay in France more than you expect to do. Of course, we who are left behind cannot but feel a little selfish regret at your absence; however, we'll comfort ourselves with the thought of your speedy return. I was not aware that Lady Joan had been poorly."

"Nor were we. She said nothing about it until she was getting better, when she sent this invitation for me," said Ada.

"There's the gong; let us go down," cried Jessy, springing up, and holding out a hand to Mary, who took it, and was kept a close prisoner until they reached the dining-room.

The warm, ruddy glow of firelight and lamplight falling on the rich crimson of the carpet and window draperies, and on the gilded frames of the pictures, made the apartment look exceedingly inviting. It was a handsome one at all times, but on winter evenings it had a peculiarly cosy aspect. The dark wainscoting and the elaborate carving of the roof showed to best advantage in the lamplight; and the handsome fireplace itself, with its massive dog-grate and polished brasswork, brightened the whole room. The furniture, some of which was of great antiquity, was of massive oak, now black as ebony. One large cabinet, in particular, claimed the admiration of all beholders for its unique and graceful workmanship, and the curious ornaments it contained. Here and there appeared rare curiosities of ancient and modern art, including several busts from the treasure-houses of Italy. These, from their pedestals, looked calmly down upon their possessors, as if compassionating them for having been born in these degenerate days. But there was no profusion of ornament; good taste characterised the entire arrangement of the room, which for that reason had a homely, comfortable appearance, as if it were always waiting and ready to welcome guests.

And certainly in this it but reflected the spirit of its owners, whose hospitality was of wide repute.

To-night their greeting was particularly cordial, as Mary thought, and she found herself the object of many kind attentions both from the baronet and his wife. Kenneth, of course, as the acknowledged suitor of their daughter, occupied a privileged position, in which he seemed perfectly at his ease. He had always been a favourite there; and he knew it.

After dinner Sir Edward retired for a while to the library, where all his business affairs were conducted. His wife seated herself by the fire, with a small work-table at her side, and beckoned Mary to take the vacant place next her. Stephen was summoned to the piano-stool, and his sisters gathered round him, selecting some music for him to play. He was not an expert pianist, but he played with taste and feeling, being endowed with that innate appreciation of exquisite harmony, without which no mere mechanical skill avails for much. He could interpret the spirit of a piece; an accomplishment by no means common even among musicians of a much higher grade of proficiency than was he; and it was this, perhaps, more than anything else, that lent such a charm to his playing. Ada invariably chose him as her accompanist when she sang, because he could adapt himself so well to the requirements of her voice; and, when he had finished one of Handel's majestic melodies, she put a song before him, and began to sing in her clear, flute-like notes, while Jessy joined in at certain parts - and occasionally at the wrong time.

Kenneth sat near the piano listening, and watching Ada's face.

Harry wandered restlessly about the room, followed by his dogs, whose frequent ebullitions of spirit he checked with a menacing flourish or two of his riding-whip, which, by-the-bye, was as useless an implement as the walking-sticks of our city dandies, since it was well known that he never applied it to the most restive horse he rode, much less to his frolicsome dogs. Yet he carried it about everywhere, in spite of his mother's frequent remonstrances.

"Harry," she requested, after a scuffle behind the sofa among the dogs, "I wish you would put those animals out of the room; we really can hardly hear the music for the noise they make."

"Down, you rascals! Don't you hear that

imperious mandate for your banishment?" was his response, addressed to the unconscious delinquents, while he brandished the harmless whip they had long ceased to fear. Then, with a glance at Mary, he added: "Do they really disturb you?"

"Oh, no," she answered. "Our Cæsar at home is much more boisterous than those two; I am quite at ease with them."

"Perhaps if their master would sit down, they might follow his example," suggested Lady Douglas.

Harry was not slow to take the hint, though he seemed scarcely more at rest then than before. In fact, there was a nervous commotion about his movements to-night which did not escape the notice of either his mother or Mary Errol. The latter, though she preserved her outward composure, shrank from the furtive glances directed to her face by her hostess from time to time. The question whether she, too, surmised Harry's real intentions in regard to herself caused her secret agitation, and more self-reproach for her own previous blindness than she had ever felt before.

But when Lady Douglas was summoned from the room by a servant, and she was left alone with her son, the effort to maintain even outward composure became infinitely more painful. She would fain have risen to join the group around the piano at the other end of the room; but this, she instinctively felt, would be to betray her knowledge, or rather suspicion of his intention, so she remained seated, pretending to make a minute examination of the embroidery Lady Douglas had just laid aside.

The music was still going on; they were singing a trio, in which Kenneth's rich, thrilling tenor notes bore a conspicuous part; and Mary tried hard to listen. But her companion's attitude arrested her attention, and caused her heart to beat painfully. She saw in his ardent face that same look it had worn that morning in the cottage, when he grasped her hand and seemed on the point of speaking the words she now dreaded to hear; and, had the expression been one of hatred, it would have wounded her less.

Perhaps he saw indications of this feeling in her face, for his own became grave, and the thought of Raymond Dunbar recurred to him with renewed emphasis, making him determined to know the truth once for all.

"Mary," he began, his handsome, kind face aglow with feeling, and his frank, brown eyes looking yearningly into hers, "I wanted to tell you something that day I called on you. I don't know whether you guessed what it was; but I must tell vou now, I have long wished to do so, but I-I was afraid to risk vexing you by being too sudden. I am apt to be rash, you know, at all times. Don't be afraid of me, Mary," he added, observing that her face had grown pale with suppressed agitation. "If what I am going to say is disagreeable to you, you have only to say so, and I will not trouble you again. I have grown to love you more than anyone in the world, though I know well you are far too good for a careless fellow like me; and I just want you to tell me plainly whether you will give me your love or not. Believe me, there is nothing on earth I would prize so highly."

He waited in ill-disguised excitement for her answer, watching every change of her features, as a criminal on trial might watch the face of the judge with whom his sentence lies. But his hope began to wane when he saw a tear steal over her cheek, and the half-averted face assume an expression of genuine pain. She was evidently struggling to control her feelings before giving him an answer; and he began to apprehend what that answer would be.

Poor Mary dared not look at the pleading face bent upon her; but every tone of his voice made her start. What could she do to save him pain? This was the question that occupied her mind to the exclusion of every other.

"Harry," she said at last, "I don't know what to say to you. You have been always such a good friend, that I cannot bear to do or say anything to vex you; and yet—"

"I think I know what you would say," he continued. "I have only one more question to ask, and you need not answer it unless you choose—is there some other you love better than me?"

It was a hard question to answer, truly, with those sad eyes dwelling piteously on her face, and knowing as she did how much he was suffering already; but truth had ever distinguished her dealings with him formerly, and she would not alter now, even although she saw there was bitterness in his heart.

Frankly, and with that consideration for his feelings which a kind heart will never fail to devise, she told him of her betrothal to Raymond Dunbar, and of the long understood attachment that had existed between them,

He listened in silence till she had finished, his cheek resting on his open palm, and his eyes greedily devouring every expression that flitted across her face. Then, as she ceased to speak, his gaze wandered to the fire, as if he were reading further secrets in its blaze. For several minutes he remained thus, and she stole a glance at him in suspense as to the meaning of his silence. Suddenly he looked up with one of his boyish smiles, half-playful, half-sad, and said: "And do you think Raymond so very much better-looking than me?"

The expression of his face, as he spoke those words, affected Mary more than ten thousand reproaches could have done. She burst into tears, despite all efforts to quell the emotion. Smitten with compunction, Harry seized her hands, saying: "Don't! Mary, don't! I know you pity me, and I know you'll never betray my secret. You have been the best friend I ever had; I'll love you till the day I die. And may you be as happy as you deserve to be. God knows I wish it; yes, with all my heart. Good-bye."

Before she could find voice to reply, he was gone, leaving her so wretched that, if she had really been to blame for his sufferings, she could not have felt more so. A thousand kind things were in her heart to say to him, but she felt she would never again have an opportunity of saying them. Something in his face had told her as much. Henceforth they could meet only as strangers; the old friendly intercourse that had been so pleasant could never be resumed. Oh, if he had only been content to remain her friend, how happy they might both have been!

All this while the music had gone on, the musicians being too much engrossed with themselves and their employment to notice the little drama just enacted within a few yards of them. If Jessy did remark that her brother seemed particularly interested in his conversation with Mary, she did not make any allusion to it when, shortly afterwards, she came over to the fireplace and threw herself down in the seat which Harry had just vacated.

"Weren't you charmed, Mary, with our performance?" she asked, drawing closer to her friend, whose face she stealthily scrutinised, directing at the same time, a frowning look to the door through which her brother had vanished.

Mary had had time to dry her tears and regain

calmness, so she answered in her usual tones that she enjoyed the music, and hoped they did not mean to stop already.

As she said this she glanced to the piano, where Ada was talking in an undertone with her lover, while Stephen continued to search the folios for some song that had been requested.

"Stephen," called Jessy, "I want to speak to you."

The boy came over, and was told, in a mysterious whisper, to leave the piano, as Ada and Kenneth wished to be left alone. He understood, and obediently crept away, nowise loth to be free.

Nor did his absence seem to be noticed by the two lovers. Ada had taken the piano-stool, and was idly turning over the leaves of the folio before her, while Kenneth leant on the instrument to talk with her.

"How long do you expect to be away?" he was saying.

"Six weeks, at any rate," she answered; "I hope not longer."

The warmth with which she uttered the wish seemed to impress him, for he paused before replying, while successive changes passed rapidly across his face.

"It will soon pass," he said at length.

"Soon?" she queried, turning her blue eyes on his handsome features, and smiling as she waited for his answer.

"Why, yes," he said, smiling in turn, but blushing at the same time. "In sunny France time will have wings for you."

"And for you here at home?"

"Need you ask?" he returned, pressing the hand nearest him. "Who is there—what is there to lend time wings while I am without you?"

"Will you think of me often?"

"Rather; will I ever cease to think of you?"

"And write to me often?"

"As often as the post will carry a letter."

"One thing more. Will you be very good to your mother and Mary, and very distant to Mr. Lesly?"

"Surely you don't think that I am naturally unkind to them? And with regard to Lesly, I have promised you already to be less in his company; but, ot course, as I explained to you, our position in the custom-house makes it imperative that I should be on good terms with him. You understand this, don't you?"

"Yes; I know you will be faithful to your promise. Forgive my foolish fears. You see I am anxious about parting from you even for a little time; and love has many misgivings at parting hours. Is not that true?"

"I don't think it should have. Don't you remember the words read to us last Sunday about perfect love casting out fear'?"

"Ah! but is there such a thing as perfect love in this world?"

"I hope so. Surely you don't mean me to infer that you are dissatisfied with mine?"

"No; and yet-"

"Well, what is the defaulting element in ours?"

"I can't express my meaning; only I think perfect love must have its home in some happier sphere."

"Why, surely you are growing melancholy, Ada, in the prospect of this short separation?"

"Perhaps I am. I have always had a foolish dread of separations from my friends, however short. I torment myself with fancying what may happen before meeting again, or even questioning whether the meeting shall ever take place. I know it is foolish, yet I can't help it."

"But you must try to help it, dearest, and think rather of our speedy reunion. I trust this will be our last parting before—"

He stopped, with a smile at the blushing face, as Lady Douglas at that moment joined them, and inquired what they were discussing so earnestly.

"You could not part us so abruptly without allowing us a little time to talk about it, could you, Lady Douglas?" was Kenneth's response.

"Nay, sir, you must not accuse me of being the cause of your parting," rejoined the countess. "I can assure you I was as much taken by surprise as anyone when Joan's invitation came for Ada to accompany her on her tour. But I really think the project a very favourable one for Ada, because she will derive benefit and enjoyment, too, from the entire novelty of France. And, you know, 'absence makes the heart grow fonder.'"

"I rather think it makes it forget," chimed in Jessy, who, with Mary, came up at that moment. "I know, if I were going to be married, I shouldn't allow my affianced to be an hour out of my sight so much faith have I in the constancy of the most inconstant of animals—man. Don't you think I'm right, Mary?"

Thus suddenly appealed to, Mary awoke with a

start from the distressing train of thought in which she had been indulging. Her look of mild surprise, even more than Jessy's remark, called forth some merriment from everyone, except her brother, whose face expressed little relish for the jest.

"Jessy, you silly girl, when will you learn to be silent?" exclaimed Lady Douglas, laughing all the while. "No husband will ever be affianced to you if you allow your tongue such licence. See how you have made even Kenneth blush."

"Then there is still hope of him," persisted the undaunted Jessy; "for somebody says you need never lose hope of a man so long as he can blush. But you are blushing, too, Mary," she added, facing round to the individual in question. "What have I said to provoke such silent witnesses of—of some secret consciousness hidden deep.—"

"Jessy, I insist upon your being quiet," interrupted Lady Douglas, perceiving that, for some reason or other, the subject was not an agreeable one to Miss Errol; then, turning to her elder daughter, she requested her to sing "Aye waukin' o," a song of which she was specially fond.

But somehow Ada did not readily comply; and when she did, her voice had an unusual tremor in its notes, especially in rendering those words:—

"Aye waukin' o',
Waukin' aye and eerie;
Sleep I canna get
For thinkin' o' my dearie."

She seemed glad to bring the song to a close, and left the piano on the pretext that she had exhausted her vocal powers for that evening.

Jessy, who was still completely mystified as to the cause of the blushing on the part of Kenneth and his sister, and perceiving that music had failed to restore them all to ease, proposed a game of chess, and brought out the chessboard to a snug corner beside the fire.

As she was arranging the pieces, her mother, noticing her want of skill in the process, looked round the room and said: "Where is Harry? He understands the game thoroughly. Go and fetch him, Jessy."

Jessy did not seem to think there was much use in going; however, she went, and presently returned, announcing that Harry was nowhere to be found.

"Nonsense, Jessy. I left him in the room here not a quarter of an hour ago. Mary, he was with

you then; did he say he was going out?" said Lady Douglas, turning as she spoke to poor Mary, whose heart beat so violently that she fancied everyone must hear it.

Mary replied with a brief negative, and occupied herself arranging, or rather disarranging, the pieces on the chessboard. Fortunately her interrogator was short-sighted, else the quick changes of Mary's features must have betrayed her. Kenneth and Ada were too much engaged to notice her; but once more Jessy's keen eye searched the quiet face, and drew thence its own conclusions.

Lady Douglas went out of the room, and, on questioning the servants, learned to her no small surprise that her son had saddled his horse and ridden off no one knew where. The news would have alarmed her had she not been accustomed to similar proceedings of an equally erratic character on his part. As it was, she was at a loss to comprehend what could have possessed him to make him ride out on such a night. However, he was sure to return soon; and comforting herself with this reflection, she went back to the party in the dining-room.

But the evening wore away, and the Errols took their departure, and still he did not come. Toward midnight she became so alarmed that she had persuaded her husband to despatch a groom in quest of him, when, to their great relief, the sound of his horse's hoofs was heard in the avenue.

"Harry, where have you been?" she cried, as he dismounted at the door.

"I was feeling unwell, and resorted to myusual remedy—a brisk canter over the country," was his answer, as he resigned his reeking steed into the groom's hands. Nor would he furnish any other explanation.

But the mother's unerring instinct was not to bethus deceived, and she followed him to his room shortly afterwards. The door was reluctantly opened when she knocked.

"Harry, my dear boy, something is wrong," she said, imploringly. "Tell me what it is."

"Not now, mother; I cannot tell you now," he answered, in an unsteady voice. "Don't speak to me now; I cannot bear it. I will tell you by-and-by."

"Oh, my boy, can I not help you?" she cried.

"No, no, mother; leave me," he implored. "A great grief has come to me to-night, but I cannot

speak of it yet. Say nothing to anyone. Oh, leave me, mother! I want to be alone."

It flashed upon her now, and with a tearful kiss she came away, leaving him to battle with his first real sorrow.

CHAPTER XVI. A SUBTLE CHANGE.

Six weeks had elapsed since the events recorded in the previous chapter. It was now the last day of the old year, and snow lay on the ground. It had been falling since morning, and its heavy flakes hastened the approach of darkness. So dreary was the scene outside, that Mary Errol felt glad to shut it out and light the lamp.

Betsy had begun to lay the cloth for tea, as both Ronald and Kenneth expected to be home early that evening.

Mrs. Errol sat knitting by the fire, a sleek grey cat purring on the arm of her chair, and Kenneth's dog Cæsar squatted on the hearthrug at her feet.

As the clock in the hall struck five, steps were heard outside.

"I wonder if that's Kenneth?" said Mrs. Errol to Mary.

"No, mother; look at Cæsar, and you'll see it isn't."

The animal had slowly risen, and was lazily-stretching himself; then, as the door opened, and Ronald's tall figure, powdered from top to toe with white flakes, presented itself, he went cautiously up to him, sniffing his garments with a gingerly air that betokened anything but cordial relations between them.

"Regular Christmas weather," said Ronald cheerily, as he shook the snow from his clothes, and stamped his wet feet on the mat. "If it snows as hard to-night as it has done to-day, the coach won't run to-morrow, I fear. It had difficulty enough in making its way even to-night. Has Kenneth come home yet?"

"We expect him every minute," said Mrs. Errol; "he said he was coming early to-night. You'd better change those boots, Ronald; there's nothing worse for cold than snow-water."

"So I shall, mother," he returned, suiting the action to the word, and carrying the boots to Betsy to get dried. "I mean to make myself particularly cosy to-night."

Mrs. Errol, detecting a tone of unusual cordiality

and cheerfulness in these words, looked up into his ruddy face as if for corroboration of these favourable symptoms; nor was she disappointed, for indeed he had never looked so comely, she thought.

"I'm glad to see ye so weel pleased, Ronald," she said, with an answering smile. "Have ye heard good news o' ony kind?"

"Perhaps I have," he replied; "but I won't tell it till we're all met. I hope Kenneth will be punctual."

"I think I hear him coming. Ay, it's just him; Caesar never mistakes his step," said Mrs. Errol, watching the dog's eager bound to the door, and smiling to hear its joyous, impatient whine until it should be opened.

"You're just in time, Kenneth," said Mary, who was running across the passage to hasten the advent of the tea. "Dear me, you're just as white as Ronald was. What a cold night. You won't go out again, I hope?"

"Why not? I don't mind the cold," he answered, not seeming to relish the inquiry, as he brushed the powdery flakes from his great-coat and leggings, and rubbed his boots vigorously on the door mat.

"Oh, Kenneth! I thought you would spend this, the last night of the year, at home with us," said Mary, with tender reproach in both voice and looks. "You have been out very often of late. Surely you're not going to Lynnburgh again?"

"What should prevent me, Mary? You don't seem to think of the wretched monotony of my life in that horrid custom-house. I hate it more and more every day. There was a time when I did not contemplate such an existence, I can tell you; and if I seek a little recreation now and then, I think you needn't grudge it. Remember you and I are very differently constituted. I cannot live without some excitement, and I must have it. So don't let us quarrel over it; you know I don't wish to vex you or anyone."

He drew off his outer wraps, and went upstairs, where he spent some time dressing for the evening's engagement, as he had been in the habit of doing for several weeks.

When he came down in his evening attire, Mrs. Errol's smile died out; but she did not make any remark. Mary, too, had grown sober, though she tried to conceal the fact as she busied herself with

the tea things and chatted with Ronald. But even Ronald himself lost some of his animation on observing his brother's dress.

"Why, Kenneth, you might have kept *this* night sacred to the fireside," he remarked, with a touch of annovance in his voice.

"And why this night more than any other?" returned Kenneth, leisurely sipping his tea, but obviously quite preoccupied and eager to be gone.

"Well, it's the last night of the old year, or, as Betsy calls it, Hogmanay, and folk usually like to spend it by their own ingle; but, besides that, I wanted you to hansel my good fortune," rejoined Ronald, his face gradually resuming its bright look.

"I can do that just now, I hope," said Kenneth.
"Let us hear what your good fortune is."

Mrs. Errol and the other two interested looked in expectancy for Ronald's answer; but he only smiled with provoking calmness, and inquired if everyone was served.

As this was the case, he proudly gazed round the little circle, and announced that he had that day been made a partner in the business with which he had been for years connected, and that henceforth he hoped to be able to maintain his mother and sister in affluence.

The news was hailed with great rejoicing. Mary left her seat and gave her brother a hearty kiss of congratulation. Mrs. Errol made no demonstration save shedding a tear or two in pure joy at the deserved reward of her hard-working boy, who had been their sole support in dark days. Kenneth gave his brother a vigorous slap on the back, saying: "Good, old boy! Go on and prosper; or, as my half-forgotten Latinity puts it, "macte virtute esto."

Ronald received their congratulations with a modest pride that became him, and proceeded to enlarge on the favourable prospect of further advantages both to himself and all the others. There must be no more rigid economy now, he said; they must allow themselves all reasonable indulgences. His mother and Mary must wear nothing but the best dresses to be got for money; and Betsy's wages must be increased. He even dwelt upon the probability of building a more commodious residence, in a less exposed situation, and within less distance of the scene of his labours. In short, he seemed resolved to allow himself the rare pleasure of "biggin' castles in the air"; although, in this case, the castles had a more substantial

basis in the handsome income already his, and if his structures were a little too high for the foundation on which they rested, the fault was pardonable in so inexperienced a builder of those aerial edifices.

His glowing anticipations, however, received an interruption in the departure of his brother, whose heightened colour and glancing eye betokened that his dreams took another direction. Mrs. Errol sighed as she saw him go, and Mary followed his handsome form with mingled sorrow and reproach in her face. But to these symptoms he paid no attention; and they knew it was in vain to remonstrate.

The tea things were removed, and the remaining three gathered round the fire to discuss this happy turn of Fortune's wheel; and as prosperity seemed to agree so well with Ronald, and to produce so mollifying an effect on his character, they welcomed it all the more on that account, entering heartily into his joy, and sharing his hopefulness.

The scientific books were not produced that evening, nor yet the ledgers, which he occasionally brought home with him. He was evidently resolved to be social; and he succeeded.

Not long after they were seated round the fire, a sharp rap at the outer door somewhat startled them. It was the post, with one letter for Kenneth. Mary recognised the handwriting, which had become very familiar during the past six weeks. "It's from Ada," she said, laying it aside until the return of its owner.

This, however, was not till long after all except herself had gone to bed. Kenneth had repeatedly objected to her sitting up for him, but she would not be deterred; so he found her, as usual, sewing beside the fire.

"There's a letter for you from Ada," she said, pointing to the missive on the table. "I should like to know when they intend coming home."

He remained in the passage outside for a minute or two, divesting himself of the snow-besprinkled garments, then coming into the room, with eyes that quivered in the light, he took up the letter and proceeded to read.

Mary could see that his complexion was more brilliant than she had ever observed it to be before when he came in, and that his eyes sparkled with an unusual brightness. But, as he perused the letter, both the flush of colour on his cheek and the lustre in his eyes seemed to fade, leaving his face almost serious.

"Are they not coming home?" inquired Mary.

"What makes you suppose they're not coming home?" he retorted, quite sharply. Then, noticing the pained, astonished look of Mary's face, he added in relenting tones: "You may read the letter yourself; there's nothing particular in it."

Mary took the letter without surprise, for he had shown her several from the same correspondent before; whose contents, indeed, anyone might have read, as they betrayed no sentimental emotions. but dealt chiefly in lively descriptions of the new scenes in which she was moving, and which were always contrasted rather unfavourably with "dear auld Scotland," where, nevertheless, she longed to be. Her love revealed itself only in a deep undercurrent, rather to be felt as a general permeating influence than traceable to any definite expression.

This epistle proved to be a very brief one, merely announcing that they expected to be home in the third week of January. Ada expressed her regret not to be at the family party on New Year's Day, but threw out a hope that another might be assembled to welcome her home. In a hasty post-script she said she hoped this would be their last parting.

"This is good news, indeed," commented Mary, returning the epistle. "I endorse the idea of having a party to welcome her home. Don't you, Kenneth? Just a family party, of course, and, perhaps, one or two friends, such as Lady Joan to prevent its being too quiet."

"How you run on, Mary," he replied, with a smile that rather chilled than cheered. "I suppose we must leave the family to hold a party or not as they choose. By-the-bye, did you hear that Harry Douglas came home last night?"

The coldness of his first words, coupled with the sudden announcement of the last, affected Mary so much, that she had difficulty in framing a reply.

"No, I was not aware of it," she said at last.

"I saw him to-night in the theatre with the Drummonds. His voyage to the Mediterranean seems to have agreed with him; he was looking as brown as a berry."

No one knew of Mary's secret, which she had jealously guarded even from her mother and Raymond Dunbar; nor did anyone seem to suspect it—a circumstance for which she felt grateful.

"They will be glad to have him back again," was her calm reply. Then, as she folded up her work, which was a pair of embroidered slippers she had been engaged on for many weeks past, and which she meant to present to the brother before her on the morrow, she asked:

"Have you forgotten that to-morrow is New Year's Day?"

"Nay, this is New Year's Day," he rejoined. "I suppose we should wish one another many happy returns."

"Yes, it really is two hours since the new year came in. I wish you had been with us, as you were last year at this time, Kenneth. Don't you remember how we all sat up, waiting to hear the church-bell ring, and Betsy brought in ginger wine, determined to first-fyot us, as she calls it?"

"I remember it quite well. But why should you speak with that tone of reproach, as though I were committing a sin by being absent to night?"

"I think both you and we were happier then."

"Speak for yourself, Mary. If you are not so happy now as then, it looks bad for poor Raymond. Ah! I have you there, little croaker."

Without waiting for a reply, he dashed upstairs, leaving her to follow more leisurely.

Some time elapsed before another letter came from Ada, but the postmark, "Paris," showed that she was already on her way home, while the letter itself expressed her intention to be at the Castle within ten days from that date.

This letter was followed by another, about a week later, addressed to Mary herself. It came one morning just as Kenneth was setting out, and, as he was in haste to be at the custom-house, she ran after him to the gate, announcing that Ada would be home on the following Friday, just three days from that time, and expected to find Mary and her brother at the Castle on her arrival, which would be in the evening.

"Yes, I know; she told me so in her last letter," he returned. "But don't detain me just now, Mary; I should have been at my desk half-an-hour ago—cursed slavery as it is."

He walked off rapidly as he spoke these last words, which fell coldly on the sister's heart. A feeling of intense dissatisfaction and disappointment was lodged there, which deepened during the few intervening days before the return of Ada Douglas. Kenneth seemed restless and troubled,

and was never at home a single evening. She knew whither he invariably betook himself: his love of excitement appeared to be rather increased than appeased by those nightly visits to the theatre; and he had been attending it regularly for the last month or more. She knew that Mr. Lesly generally accompanied him on these visits, and that they did not repair to Glenathole immediately on the close of the performances. In answer to a question she had once put to him on this point, he had reluctantly admitted that they sometimes met after the play at the inn, and spent the night with some friends. Who these friends were he did not specify; but Mary surmised they were some of the actors, remembering what Harry Douglas had unintentionally betrayed on the occasion of her memorable visit to the theatre. Yet, unaccountable as it was, she noticed that, despite this intimacy with Lesly, her brother indicated no such enthusiastic attachment to him as formerly; nor did he resent her remonstrances on the subject with the indignation he had been wont to display. Once or twice he had even smiled, and asked her if she supposed there was no greater attraction on earth for him than Mr. Lesly. Thus, in a measure, satisfied, she suffered him to continue his visits to the theatre without upbraiding, knowing he would find more pleasing recreation at the Castle when Ada Douglas returned. And the theatre itself. Ronald had informed her, was to be closed early in the spring. Her only course, therefore, was to wait in patience.

Now, however, the period of waiting was coming to an end, and she looked eagerly forward to the consummation of her wishes.

One fact of very happy significance had recently come to her knowledge through Jessy. This was an avowed intention on the part of Sir Edward Douglas to procure for Kenneth a Government appointment in London, of a highly honourable as well as remunerative kind, which would enable him to marry in the course of a year or two. This information she was bound in honour not to communicate to her brother, to whom it would soon be made known, Jessy assured her, by Sir Edward Douglas himself. It was a joyful secret, however, though it was only imparted a day or two before the expected arrival at the Castle; and it proved an antidote to her anxiety about Kenneth during the last few days, when he appeared so strangely disturbed and harassed.

The eagerly anticipated Friday came at last. Its hours seemed terribly laggard, and Mary tried to occupy herself fully, so as to hasten their flight. Kenneth had promised to come home earlier, and drive to the Castle with her in time for dinner there, according to invitation; but, as he was very late that morning, he warned her not to be surprised although he failed to come at the precise moment.

It had begun to occur to Mary as somewhat strange that these frequent irregularities on his part were treated with so much leniency at the custom-house; but further reflection supplied her with the explanation in the fact that its governor himself was Kenneth's friend.

In spite of being forewarned, she became anxious when at the hour appointed Kenneth did not come. Ronald, who had been included in the invitation, arrived punctually to a minute, and could ill brook the delay occasioned by his brother. So impatient did he at last become, that he was on the point of walking to the custom-house to ascertain its cause, when a man arrived from that same place with a note from Kenneth, saying that business complications of an urgent nature had unexpectedly arisen, which obliged him to start at once for Leith, where he might be detained for a day or two, and begging her to make his excuses at the Castle for his compulsory absence.

"Surely you have read it by this time?" said Ronald, querulously, as Mary still scanned the hastily scrawled note with a troubled expression of face. "It must be something about those suspicious goods that were found last Monday in Edinburgh. Kenneth told me about it a day or two ago. However, we cannot wait any longer, Mary, if you mean to go at all."

"Has Kenneth never come yet?" inquired Mrs. Errol, who just then came downstairs.

"He won't be here at all to-night, mother," replied Ronald. "This is a note telling us he has had to start on a moment's notice for Leith."

"For Leith!" repeated Mrs. Errol, as much taken aback as Mary had been. "What has taken him there on such a sudden?"

"I fancy it must be this trouble they have had at the custom-house about some goods found the other day in Edinburgh that are supposed to have been smuggled. Blinkie was summoned to Edinburgh two days since," said Ronald. "I'm surprised Lesly didn't go himself; but he'll be waiting

for his summons, I suppose. Don't disturb yourself, mother; he'll be home probably to-morrow night or next morning. Come, Mary, we must be off."

"It's a vera strange proceeding, that's a' I can say," was Mrs. Errol's rejoinder, as she watched them depart in the deepening darkness; "but it's nae stranger than some ither things that hae happened at that custom-house. To think that he should hae to gang frae hame this nicht o' a' nichts in the year, and that bonny lassie wearyin' to see him! It's vera strange!"

When the brother and sister reached the Castle they saw at once, from the bright lights in the drawing-room windows, that the wanderer had returned,

"What are you loitering behind for, Mary?" queried Ronald, as they approached the entrance, after dismissing the chaise, which was to remain in the stables of the Castle till again required. "I should have thought you would be eager to fly into Ada's arms, as you girls are so fond of doing."

Mary vouchsafed no answer; and in another minute they stepped into the spacious, brilliantlylighted hall.

As usual, Jessy came flying down the staircase at the other end of it, and rushed into Mary's arms in a manner thoroughly justifying Ronald's satirical remark. But the next moment, glancing past him as though in her expectation of a third person she hardly noticed his presence, she asked, with a rueful countenance:

"Why, where is Kenneth?"

"He has been called away from home unexpectedly on business," replied Ronald, advancing and holding out his hand.

She took it almost listlessly, saying:

"How are you, Mr. Errol?" then added, "Oh, I am so sorry! It will be such a disappointment to Ada. Our party to-night seems doomed to be a failure, for Harry, too, has gone off, heaven knows where."

"I regret it very much," said Mary, following her guide upstairs, while Ronaid passed on to the room indicated by the servant in waiting. "I only received this note as I was coming away. Kenneth arranged to come with us this morning. Ronald says he thinks it is something connected with the smugglers that has taken him away."

"No doubt it must have been something very important. But it is a great disappointment; Ada will feel it terribly, I know. Oh, Mary, she is bonnier than ever. I'm sure you'll think so," said Jessy, hastening on before to her sister's room.

But Ada had heard the familiar voice, and came running along the gallery in eager haste to embrace her much-loved friend. There was nothing but kissing and laughing for the next few minutes, in which Jessy thought proper to join, much to the detriment of poor Mary's bonnet. When at last they desisted, and the two friends surveyed each other at arm's length, Ada exclaimed in joyous tones:

"Oh, Mary, how happy I am to be home again! Even the mists and dripping skies are dearer to me than sunny France. And how are you all at home, Mary? Your mother, does she keep stronger?"

"She is very well, thank you, Ada. We are all well," said Mary. "You will see for yourself soon, I hope. Ronald is with me to-night, and—and Kenneth would have been, but he has been called away suddenly on business."

"Isn't it provoking?" cried Jessy, pitying the startled look of disappointed hope that replaced the radiant smile on her sister's face.

"I—I am very sorry," said Ada, biting her lip lest they should see how it quivered.

"This is the note I got from him just before we left the house," continued Mary, holding it for Ada to read.

"Come into my room, there is more light there," said Ada, recovering from the first shock of disappointment.

When she had perused the few brief words of explanation, she quietly returned it to Mary, who repeated what Ronald had suggested relative to the smuggled goods.

But all through the evening she observed that Ada was fitfully silent or talkative, and appeared at times abstracted. She tried, however, to disguise her feelings, and entertained them all with graphic anecdotes of their experiences abroad, and was loud in her praises of her aunt Joan, who had been obliged for some reason to go direct home, instead of paying a visit first to Douglas Castle.

In addition, however, to her friend's manifest disappointment, another circumstance tended to spoil Mary's enjoyment that evening. She fancied she detected a marked diminution of the cordiality with which Lady Douglas was wont to treat her, and the more she strove against the impression the stronger it grew, until at last she became convinced that she was in possession of her secret. This conclusion was forced upon her by the further significant fact, that she never once alluded to her son's unusual absence from the family circle that night. Even when he was casually mentioned by Jessy, she took no notice of the remark.

If Sir Edward knew the real state of affairs, his manner toward Miss Errol evinced no symptom of altered feelings. She had ever been a special favourite of his. Her practical good sense and unaffected kindness of heart made her particularly engaging in his eyes. He observed, too, that her life was one of much unselfishness, of quiet self-sacrifice, indeed; all the more attractive because so little noticed. He liked to talk with her, for, as he said, she was one of the few women he knew capable of reasoning.

As she sat somewhat apart to-night, Jessy having left the room to fetch Ada's folio of views and sketches, and Ada herself having been summoned away by her maid Jenny, he came and took a seat beside her, saying he regretted Kenneth's absence very much, as he had something of importance to tell him. Mary explained the circumstances of his unexpected journey as well as she could, adding that he would probably return next day or the day following.

"Then, perhaps, you will do me the favour to ask him to call on me here as soon as he does," said the baronet.

She promised, and he appeared satisfied.

But Kenneth did not return till the beginning of the week. Ronald's conjecture had been correct; but Kenneth did not enter into particulars regarding the nature of his business when in Leith, merely stating that nothing satisfactory had resulted from it. Nor did they care to question him, as he had of late become reserved on all points concerning himself and his actions.

It was shortly after he arrived that Mary recollected Lord Douglas's invitation; and, knowing it referred to the matter on which Jessy had enjoined secrecy, she did not inform him of it till he had gone to his room, when she knocked at the door and asked for admission, which was rather reluctantly granted. He evidently feared a reprimand, for his face wore that look of enforced patience which it invariably assumed on such occasions.

"Kenneth, Sir Edward Douglas told me to ask you to call at the Castle as soon as you came home; he wishes particularly to see you," said Mary, trying to suppress any outward indication that she knew more on the subject than he did.

The words were simple and commonplace enough, but the effect they produced on Kenneth staggered her. His face grew deadly pale in a moment, and an expression almost of terror shot from his eyes.

"To see me?" he repeated, fixing a piercing glance on his sister's astonished visage. "What for?"

"Kenneth, what is the matter with you?" cried Mary, in sudden alarm. "You surely don't suppose so true a friend as he has always been could have any but a kindly motive for sending for you? Your face quite frightened me just now."

"I was taken aback by the unexpectedness of the message, that was all," he replied, smiling in his old, careless way; "and you delivered it with an air solemn enough to frighten anyone. I have got nervous, I daresay, with the exciting work I've had; I'll be myself again immediately. Of course, I meant to go to the Castle to-night, in any case. How was Ada looking after her travels?"

"Bright and happy, and delighted to be home again; but she was grievously disappointed that you were not with us that night she came home."

"It couldn't be helped; however, I'll see her tonight, and make up for it. Will you come with me, Mary?"

"No, of course not. Sir Edward wished only to see you."

He looked disappointed, and repeated the request just as he departed on his errand.

His interview with the baronet did not last very long; and Ada, who had been breathlessly awaiting its termination to meet her lover after what seemed a separation of as many years as it was weeks, heard his well-known voice saying,—

"I cannot thank you enough, Sir Edward, for this munificent kindness; it is infinitely greater than I deserve,"

"Not a word, I beg. Here is Ada, wearying, I have no doubt, to see her defaulting knight.—Now, be sure you rate him soundly, while I go and see where your mother is."

Hardly waiting to see the meeting, the kindhearted baronet went away, leaving the lovers alone.

In an instant the girl's arms were round her beloved's neck, and a flood of happy tears rained down his cheek from her overflowing eyes. She could not speak for very joy, and clung to him as though dreading another dreary parting. But this emotion did not last long; she looked up into his face presently, and, smiling through her tears, said:

"And are you very glad to have me back again?"

"Need you ask it?" he replied.

"But are you very glad?" she repeated; "as glad as I am to see your face once more?"

"And how am I to know how glad you are?" he rejoined, gazing down on the sweet face that lay on his shoulder.

"Ah, you know well without my telling you,"
-she answered, her great love beaming out of her
-upturned eyes. "I wish—"

"Well, let me hear your wish."

"I won't tell you. But are you really very glad to see me again?"

"What makes you repeat that question so often? Do you doubt me?"

"Oh, no; but your face does not seem quite what it used to be: you look almost sad to-night."

"These are foolish fancies, dear Ada. You must not gauge my love by the expression of my face. We do not always smile when we are very happy, do we?"

"Yes, 1 know. dear Kenneth; but love, you know, has keen vision, and no change can visit the loved one's face without its notice. Forgive me if I am fanciful; but, you see, I was ever tormenting myself with foolish conjectures about your absence on the night of my return, and perhaps that has made me apt to imagine that dear face less loving than it used to be. Yet it is not all imagination. You do seem a little sad. Tell me, my dearest love, has anything occurred to vex you?"

"Nothing of any consequence, dearest: mere business worries. I am sorry if I have allowed them to betray themselves in my looks, since you are foolish enough to fancy me changed on that account."

"Then you are not changed, and love me just as much as ever?"

"What can I say or do to satisfy you, you inveterate sceptic? Is that ring I gave you not pledge enough of my love?"

"Ah, forgive my doubts! I know you would not change to me. If you knew how my heart has clung to you during our short separation, I am sure you would not wonder that I dread the very slightest symptom of change." Again the tears brimmed over, and she pressed her cheek against his own, as if to hide them from his gaze.

He drew her closer to him, and murmured in her ear.

"I think you love me more than I deserve, Ada: I almost fear I can never realise your ideal; and then, if I were to disappoint you, your heart would break."

"Oh, don't say that!" she implored. "I fear it is I who am not worthy of you. But, indeed, I love you more than any words can tell."

"I know you do," he answered, speaking in earnest, grave tones; "and I will do my best to make you happy. If I fail to realise your expectations, you will make allowance for me, will you not?"

"Oh! Kenneth, why do you speak in that way? Your words have something in them that pains me," she cried in sudden alarm. "It almost seems as though you felt already some unhappy change that makes you fear disappointment in the future."

"Hush, Ada. It is only my awkward way of expressing myself. We shall both be as happy as the day is long, I hope. I merely mean that you are not to expect too much of me. Don't you remember what Shakespeare says of his sex? 'We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us.'—But we have had enough of this unpleasant theme; come, let us talk of something more agreeable. You have told me nothing of France, I mean from your own lips; and I want to hear all you can tell me about it, having never been there myself. You mentioned in one of your letters that you had taken several sketches. Suppose you go and fetch them?"

She was about to say something more on the topic that lay nearest her heart, but the entrance of Lady Douglas and Jessy prevented her; and she had no other opportunity of doing so that evening, for they were not left again alone. Even her father spent the remainder of the time with them, seeming to find a new delight in their reunion.

But after Kenneth had gone, and all the household had retired to rest, she remained in the great dining-room alone, pacing the floor at times, as if compelled by disquieting thoughts to seek relief in motion.

They had met; the meeting so joyously antici-

pated through many a lonely day had come to pass, and yet something had poisoned its promised bliss. What was it? This was the question that gnawed remorselessly at her heart, destroying all its peace.

Ah! she was beginning to taste the bitter fruits of all idolatry; to learn the first sad lesson all must learn who have spurned the warning—" Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE MYSTERY SOLVED.

"JESSY, where is Ada?" inquired Lady Douglas, one morning about a month after the events recorded in the last chapter, as she entered the room, or studio as it was called in jest, where Miss Jessy at intervals devoted herself to painting.

"In her room, mamma," answered Jessy, not lifting her brush from the canvas on which she was

depicting a very bewildering landscape.

"And what is she doing there?" further questioned the mother. "She seems to spend most of her time in her room now. I really think she is beginning to mope. On this bright day she ought to be outside; sitting so much by the fire will undo all the benefit she got from her visit to France. I am disappointed."

"It is so much colder here than in France, mamma, that I think she is afraid to venture out," said Jessy, drawing back to survey the effect of a liberal dash of crimson in the west of an exceedingly blue sky, just above a glare of yellow, where the sun was supposed to have set. "How do you think that looks, mamma?" she added, turning to her mother.

"Oh, Jessy, put away those things, and take your sister out," was the rather disappointing rejoinder, spoken with some shade of impatience. Is aw Harry just now going round to the stables. I'm sure he will drive you anywhere you wish, if Ada will consent to go. I must ask her myself; she cannot be allowed to mew herself up in this way."

Jessy watched her mother depart, with a troubled look on her usually bright face, and began to trifle with her brushes and palette, making strange medleys of colour, as if expressive of the confusion of her own thoughts at the moment. "I don't believe she will go," she ruminated; "however, I'll try to persuade her; and, if I succeed, I have a little stratagem in view which may help to clear up matters somehow."

Lady Douglas met her on the staircase with a more cheerful expression, showing that her efforts had been successful.

"Get ready, Jessy," she said; "Ada is going. I will ask Harry to get out the carriage immediately."

"Very well, mamma. I'll be ready in a jiffy," answered Jessy, running up to her room with more speed than grace. Then, hastily donning her mantle and bonnet, she dashed down again to ask her brother to drive over to Cliff Cottage.

At mention of the place his face flushed crimson for a moment, then as suddenly grew pale, and assumed a troubled aspect.

"Does Ada wish to go there?" he asked.

"Of course she does," she replied; "we haven't seen Mary for nearly ten days. She may be ill for aught we know."

"I won't have time to go there at present," he rejoined; "but Roger is doing nothing else. He will drive you over."

Jessy's sharp eyes had detected the sudden change of his features when Cliff Cottage was mentioned, and, whether she rightly interpreted it or not, she forbore to press the request. Accordingly, they set off without his escort.

"Isn't the air delicious?" said Jessy, turning to her sister, who lay back listlessly in the carriage, wrapped in furs.

"I feel it cold," was the answer; "but you know I am as fond of sunshine as the flowers; the cold freezes me up."

She drew her mantle closer round her as she spoke, and looked out at the bleak landscape, from which the snow had but recently disappeared, revealing itself even yet in white patches among the hedgerows and on the summits of the hills.

When they had ridden on for a mile or two she asked, with sudden interest:

"Where are we going?"

"Well, since we are in the direction, I think we might call on Mary Errol," replied Jessy, in wellaffected nonchalance. "I'm sure she must be ailing; nothing else could have made her so niggardly of her company."

All the sister's languid indifference was gone in a moment. Her pale cheek crimsoned, her sad eye kindled, and for an instant her manner betrayed something almost akin to fear; but the emotion passed, and she made no further resistance to the project. When, however, they approached their destination, the excitement seemed to return, and, at the sound of Cæsar's hoarse bark, she gave an involuntary start, though she instantly strove to conceal the weakness by laughing at her own timidity.

The bark was followed by Mary's appearance in the doorway; and on perceiving who the visitors were, she came running down the path, not stopping till she had Ada's arms around her neck, and Jessy's also.

"Why, Mary, we thought you must be dying, or in delirium tremens, or something of that sort," exclaimed the latter; "and I really feel disgusted to see you in ordinary health, since thereby you forfeit all claim to indulgence for your shameful abandonment of your friends."

"Why have you kept away from us so long?" asked Ada, in mildly reproachful tones, as she held Mary's hand and gazed into her face.

Poor Mary almost shrank beneath her scrutiny, and tears stole into her eyes. She dared not tell that the fear of meeting Harry Douglas had prevented her from coming to the Castle, nor yet could she devise any plausible pretext for her absence.

Ada noticed her embarrassment, and became more grave, as though she had discovered some reason for it in her own mind. Instead of repeating her inquiry, she dismissed it with some trivial supposition framed for the moment's emergency, and proceeded to inquire for Mrs. Errol.

"Mother has had another attack of rheumatism," responded Mary, still bending an anxious glance on her friend's meek face, with its untold, yet plainly legible, tale of secret sorrow. "Come in; she will be delighted to see you."

Leaving Jessy to enter first, she seized the opportunity of saying:

"Ada, you don't think I am neglecting you, surely?"

"I have missed you, Mary," was the truthful answer, spoken with a glance that more than confirmed it; "but, of course, you have many duties to attend to, which I, who have none, am disposed to forget."

"Oh, it's not that," cried Mary, greatly troubled as she saw the alteration that had been wrought in the fair face beside her since their last meeting; an alteration which she began to think herself partly the cause of. "There's another reason, dear Ada; but I cannot tell you what it is. Don't question me; only believe nothing but the very strongest could keep me from coming as often as formerly to see you. Say that you believe this, dear Ada, and relieve my fears."

The words seemed to revive a nameless fear in the young girl's mind, for again her cheek was blanched, and a tremor passed across her mouth. She did not speak for a moment or two, and her hesitation made Mary repeat her last entreaty yet more carnestly.

"I never had the least cause to doubt you yet, Mary," she presently said; "I won't begin to doubt you now."

She stopped abruptly, and seemed on the point of putting another question; but the effort to do so produced so much agitation, that Mary, becoming alarmed, asked if anything was the matter.

Then, with a desperate eagerness that was startling in one usually so calm, she turned to Mary and said:

"Tell me, for I think you know, why did Kenneth not come last Tuesday evening? Was he engaged, as he said in his note?"

A quiver, instantaneous as a lightning flash, darted across Mary Errol's face, leaving it ashenhued.

"I thought he was with you that night?" she said.

"No. Where was he? Do you know?" she asked, turning a look of burning eagerness upon her friend's pale face.

"No; I cannot tell," confessed Mary with a drooping head.

Something like a sob came from poor Ada's trembling lips; but she suppressed it with a fierce resolution, and, drawing herself up to her full height, said with unnatural composure:

"He will furnish me with the explanation himself. You will catch cold, Mary; let us go in."

Mrs. Errol, with a thick plaid rolled round her, was seated in the arm-chair, the grey cat, as usual, at her side, and Cæsar at her feet. She pled the stiffness of her joints as her excuse for not rising to greet Ada, who however, saved her the trouble by bestowing on her a warm embrace, and seating herself on the other side of her chair. And when Mrs. Errol, patting the wan cheek next her, asked how the roses she had brought from France had withered so soon, she laughed gaily, saying roses

did not bloom amid the snow. Indeed, she seemed disposed to be quite merry and talkative that day, and became more and more animated as time went on. Both her sister and Mary Errol were amazed at the sudden alteration in her manner, being utterly at a loss to account for it; and Mrs. Errol once or twice directed a look of uneasy scrutiny toward her, as if she suspected the mirth was but superficial. But she never flagged, chatting on about France and all she saw there, and horrifying Mrs, Errol with descriptions of the cannibalism of our Gallic neighbours, especially in reference to their relish for frogs and horse-flesh. Even when suggestive sounds were heard from the kitchen, indicative of dinner being in preparation, she made no sign of going, although Jessy emphatically urged

But when at last Cæsar, with a joyous bark, darted to the door, and whined to be let out, and Mrs. Errol said, "That's Kenneth," she rose, pale to the lips, and not waiting till he should come in, bade her friends a hasty good-bye, and went out to meet him, Jessy following, and Mary lingering at the door.

Cæsar had bounded down the path, and was now dancing, almost frantic with delight, round his master's tall figure.

Kenneth was not taking much notice of these demonstrations, but walked languidly up to the gate, until, raising his head, he saw Ada Douglas and her sister coming to meet him.

What made him start so suddenly, and look for a moment like a stag at bay? Why did he change colour so rapidly, and all at once become lavish in his attentions to poor, neglected Cæsar?

"I suppose we ought to apologise for intruding on one who seems to keep very shy of us?" was Jessy's greeting as they met, accompanied by a most significant glance, beneath which his own quailed.

He looked at Ada, whose face was suffused with a burning blush, called thither by those light words Jessy had spoken. His own face wore one deeper still, but it was more transient, and the confusion that at first overwhelmed him on encountering the unexpected visitors soon wore off, leaving him almost as much at his ease as usual.

He turned to accompany them down the hill, taking no further notice of Jessy's sarcasm than by a mere assurance that the cottage was open to friends at all times, who never need apologise for their visits.

Jessy was disposed to indulge in raillery of a yet more exasperating kind, but a look at her sister's face restrained her.

"Did you see the carriage as you came up?" inquired Ada in calm, cold tones, shunning her lover's eye as she spoke.

"No; it must have gone down to the beach," he replied, another flush shooting up into his cheek as he remarked the tone in which she put the question. "The tide is very low to-day. If you will allow me, I'll run down and see."

Hardly waiting for their assent, he darted off, and presently returned, followed by the carriage.

Jessy went to inquire of Roger whether he could drive them a little way along the shore, as the sun was still bright, and the sea looked inviting.

Ada advanced more slowly, and with a beating heart, dreading, as it seemed, to be alone with her lover. They had not met for more than a week: and that terrible suspicion, first roused within her on their interview after her return from France, had been fostered by his strange conduct since then, until the episode occurred about which she had spoken to Mary. If any doubt had yet lingered in her mind, this banished it for ever. He was changed, and something had changed him: what was it? Not till this question was answered was rest possible. It rankled in her mind, like poison in a wound, with ever-increasing virulence. She was unable to bear suspense any longer, and, now that she saw him once more, the desire to know the truth reached its climax, though it owned its intensity rather to passionate love for him than to any more selfish feeling.

Yet when he placed himself by her side, and she tried to utter the question burning on her lips, her agitation made it impossible. In the presence of this man she felt powerless. He seemed to exercise a spell over her every faculty, leaving even her will impotent to obey its own dictates. Attempted resistance only proved this.

She walked on in silence, till the opportunity was almost gone, Kenneth nearly as embarrassed as herself. They were within a few yards of the carriage ere she could command herself sufficiently to say:

"Kenneth, I have something I must speak to you about. Can you come to the Castle to-night?"

Again the hot blood rushed to his very temples, and his manner became painfully confused.

"I—I fear I cannot come to-night. I have—an engagement. Shall we say to-morrow?"

He stopped, abashed before the look darted on him from those deep blue eyes; and next moment she had disappeared within the carriage, Jessy springing in after her.

He stood as if rooted to the spot till it passed from view, then moodily walked back to the house.

Not a word spoke poor Ada Douglas as they drove on their way home. Jessy almost feared to address her, so feverish a look had come into her face. Her eyes seemed to glitter as with hidden fire, and two bright red spots burned on either cheek. She compressed her lips as if in pain, though not a sound escaped them. Never in all her life had she looked thus; and Jessy became afraid, as slowly the truth began to dawn on her mind, that alienation had arisen between her sister and the man she so devotedly loved. She had seen that terrible glance, scathing as lightning, that gleamed for a moment in Ada's eyes as she parted from him, and had formed her own conclusion regarding it. But sympathy kept her silent; nor did she even risk betraying her knowledge of what had transpired by talking at all to her sister, who seemed hardly conscious of her presence at any rate.

As they drove up the avenue of Douglas Castle, a carriage was just then being taken round to the stables from the front entrance.

"Whose carriage is that?" asked Jessy of the servant who admitted them.

"Sir Reginald Stanley's, ma'am," replied the man. "He has just this minute arrived."

" Has lunch been served?"

"Not yet, ma'am; it has been delayed on his account."

"Come, Ada, we have hardly time to get ready," said Jessy; and her sister slowly followed her upstairs, that strange, feverish look still burning on her face.

Sir Reginald's visits were generally accompanied by a good deal of stir and merriment, and welcomed on that account by all the inmates of the Castle. His advent at this time was particularly agreeable to Jessy, who entertained a vague hope that his genial kindness and good-natured pleasantry would have some effect in dispelling her sister's melancholy. Equally agreeable was it to Harry, between whom and Sir Reginald there had always subsisted a perfect understanding and sympathy. They had many tastes in common, and the baronet's perfect freedom from conventionality, due probably to his long experience of camp-life, made him a very congenial companion.

His visits were as brief as they were unexpected, and usually left the inmates of the Castle pretty much as though a boisterous hurricane had swept over them. Yet his jovial manners and kindly ways easily reconciled them to the passing commotion, and made him regretted when he left.

There was only one who did not hail his visit at this time, and that was Ada, who, as before stated, was his special pet. His merriment jarred on her feelings; his playful kindness wearied her, for she could not respond to it as usual, and the effort to do so became hourly more painful. It was a welcome respite when, after luncheon, he accompanied llarry on a ride to Lynnburgh.

He did not return till dinner-time, evidently resuscitated by his lively exercise, and more inclined to be jocular than before.

When they had assembled for dinner, he announced, with a prompt, military decision, which somehow carried all opposition before it: "Now, we're all going to the play to-night. Harry and I have been investigating the bills, and we've procured tickets for the whole family. They are going to play "The Merchant of Venice," which has none of the freezing, blood-curdling element in it; and I promise you all a treat. Harry says the prima donna is quite sublime; and we know he is our authority on such matters. So let us despatch dinner as quickly as possible, and be off."

The proposal took everyone by surprise; but it was in vain to make any demur; go they must, willing or no; and the family coach was accordingly ordered out.

When, after dinner, the ladies left the room to get ready, Ada took the opportunity of begging to be excused from joining the party.

"Why not, child?" remonstrated her mother. "Sir Reginald will be very much disappointed, and I think this is just what you need to rouse you from your lethargy. It would look ungrateful to refuse."

"I am sure he will excuse me if you tell him I am not very well," pleaded Ada.

"You never said so before, Ada. Have you a headache?"

"No, mamma; but I am out of sorts, and not inclined for gaiety."

"Nonsense, child. You are simply moping yourself to death. Come, dear, try to be more cheerful. Why do you look so distressed? Are you really so adverse to going?"

"Oh, yes; I wish you would all go without me. I am sure Sir Reginald will excuse me."

"Very well, I will ask him," said Lady Douglas, returning to the dining-room.

The next moment Sir Reginald came striding out, exclaiming:

"Not wish to go? Why, it is chiefly on her account I have thought of it! Where is the little puss? Ah, here you are! Now could anything be harder-hearted than to refuse to humour your faithful old admirer? Come, my dear, don't say another word, but just put on your bonnet, and let me have the pleasure of showing the good folks of Lynnburgh that none of their beauties are for a moment to be compared to mine."

"But, Sir Reginald, I——" began poor Ada but she was interrupted by——

"Not a word; I won't listen. I am accustomed to be obeyed."

And, assuming the air of command so familiar to his regiment, but most unfamiliar to his friends, he stood, with an extraordinarily grave, stern face, motioning her upstairs, not relaxing a muscle till she was nearly at the top of the staircase, whereupon he burst into a hearty guffaw, and, with a pleased glance at Lady Douglas, returned to the dining-room to finish his claret.

Half an hour later they were bowling along the road to Lynnburgh, their hilarious guest keeping up a constant stream of merriment till they reached their destination.

The usual crowd had surrounded the theatre, but with such a vigorous pioneer as Sir Reginald they experienced little difficulty in getting through it.

On entering the theatre they heard the full stirring music from the orchestra, announcing that they were just in time to see the beginning of the play. Scarcely were they seated in the stage-box, which Sir Reginald had taken to ensure a good view, when the curtain rose.

The first scene passed without evoking much enthusiasm, as the audience were impatiently awaiting the next, which would introduce the fair heroine of the play. And when she did appear a perfect acclamation arose to greet her.

"By Jove! Harry, you were right," exclaimed the delighted baronet. "My eyes are not too old to be dazzled by such a blaze of beauty. Old Bill himself should have been here to see his ideal realised. I don't believe he ever dreamt of such a Portia himself. She's perfectly glorious. What do you think of her, Ada?" he suddenly asked, turning round in her direction.

Ada awoke as if from a dream at the sound of his words, which she hardly understood till he repeated the question.

"She is a beautiful woman," she quietly answered, forcing a smile to please him, and glad to be relieved from further interrogation by the continuance of the play.

She was thinking of the previous visit she had paid to that theatre in Kenneth's company, and struggling against the agonising suspense as to the cause of this terrible change that had crept imperceptibly over him. The expression he had worn that day defied any doubt concerning the fact that he was changed, and was aware of it. It seemed branded on her memory as by lightning. Even at this moment it glared before her eyes, making all the scene on the stage mere phantasmagoria. She hardly heard or understood anything of what was transpiring until the very end of the scene, when the peculiar vivacity of Portia's acting somehow arrested her attention. Just before uttering those words:

"While we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door,"

the actress glanced with a brilliant smile in the direction of the wings opposite that side of the stage on which the Douglases sat. Ada. who had a place next the stage, instinctively followed the direction of that smile, which was evidently bestowed on some unseen spectator stationed there; and as Portia, amid resounding applause, stepped to the wing, a tall form advanced from its shadow to meet her. It was revealed but for an instant; but if Heaven's lightning had descended that moment on her head, it could hardly have wrought a more scathing, blasting effect than did the momentary glimpse poor Ada obtained of Kenneth Errol bending over the upturned face of that dark, enchanting woman.

Yes, it was he; the riddle was read; and the iron had entered her soul.

She did not faint: the low moan that burst from her lips was smothered ere it could be heard. She sat motionless and rigid, as though she were being turned to stone, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, conscious of nothing save that icy chill that was freezing the blood in her veins and paralysing every faculty. It almost seemed as though she were smitten with grief for another's suffering, not her own. Perhaps it was all a hideous dream, from which she would presently awake to smile at the horrors that oppressed her now. The blow had fallen too suddenly for a full realisation of its anguish. And merciful, indeed, is the dispensation that has so ordained. How else could we escape death or insanity were not the shock of earthly calamity tempered by a timely insensibility, from which we only awake by degrees to the full consciousness of our loss?

The play went on, and Ada watched, as if she had been fascinated, that beauteous rival, whose charms and dazzling genius had eclipsed her own inferior attractions in the eyes of one dearer than life to her poor broken heart. Even amid her anguish she owned the power which had proved so fatal to her hopes of earthly happiness, and in the deep humility of her nature hardly wondered that she had been forgotten in the presence of this peerless woman. Were not the loud plaudits sounding then in her ears proof sufficient that her power was real and far-reaching, holding sway over thousands of hearts beside his? She moved there on the stage a very queen, a spell about her not to be withstood. How graceful her action! How ravishing her smile! How thrilling her voice! Who could express such variety of emotions with such wonderful fidelity to nature? What was the secret of the marvellous facility with which she ceased to be the actress and became the character she personified? Was she a mere woman or something half divine? To see her there, moving in

that charmed sphere of beauty and genius, one might have been inclined to the latter belief; and little wonder if she appeared a being more than human to the poor girl whose heart she had unwittingly broken.

They had risen to their feet, those enraptured spectators, and, in response to their vociferous cries, the fair enchantress once more stepped forth to acknowledge the tribute paid to her genius. Her smile betokened pleasure, but not pride; nay, she seemed almost glad to escape from the storm of applause bursting upon her from every quarter of the crowded theatre.

As she vanished from their sight the curtain was held back, and a face was for a moment discernible beyond it. Ada knew it well; but it seemed to look out from the shadow of a dividing grave. The bitterness of death had already begun to make itself felt in her aching heart, and there, in that strange scene, it closed for ever over its dreams of bliss, and bade them all farewell.

She rose mechanically to follow the others from the box, her eye still resting on that dark curtain that had closed like a shroud over the face she would see no more on earth. She gazed on it till someone led her away. She heard them speaking, she made replies; but it was all unreal as a dream. The slow smouldering fires of agony were beginning to make themselves felt, but they had not yet burst forth. Woe betide her when they did! As yet concealment was possible; and no one in the dimly-lighted carriage guessed that her gentle, loving heart had been ruthlessly crushed that night.

But alas for the hour when the numbness of grief should wear off, and the soul awake to its wild, rampant pangs! Alas for that later hour, when the "deadly darkness of despair" should settle down on the stricken heart, never again to leave it till death itself brought deliverance!

Has earth any balm for such hours as these?

Ask those who have sorrowed deeply: they will point you to the skies.

(To be continued)





[DE BLAAS, pinat.

"PUNCH AND JUDY."

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By MRS. HUNGERFORD.

Author of "Molly Bawn," "Phyllis," "The Hoyden," &c.

CHAPTER XX.

"Talking much is a sign of vanity."

T was decided in conclave later on that the operation should not take place until September. Vincent had been taken up to town to Sir Ebenezer Browne, and that great man had given it as his opinion that-yes-there might be a chance! A very remote one-but still a chance! The interview had shaken Vincent terribly; and, indeed, ever since she had been restless, difficult—her spirits very unequal. And now that the time draws near -now that golden September is nearly with us, "Alle in yellowe clad"—the month that is to leave her sightless for ever, or restore her to that most blessed thing on earth called light, her nature sways to and fro, now giving her quick, wild outbursts of hope, to be met to-morrow by still fiercer pangs of grief and depression; hours spent in deepest gloom.

To meet these, to struggle with and overcome them, has been the anxious task of those around her; and when on Thursday last an invitation to a picnic came from Mrs. Deane-Burnes, a near neigh-

bour of theirs when she is at home-which is seldom -Mrs. Egerton gladly made up her mind to accept it, and-which required more thought-decided on making up the Squire's mind to accept it also.

Mrs. Deane-Burnes is a woman-large, rich, worldly-abhorred by the Squire. She is certainly a rather impossible person, who gives much of her time to London, with a view to marrying her girls, running down to her home in this little sequestered part of the world at odd moments. One odd moment has driven her here now: the melancholy attempt to marry her eldest girl to a millionaire, who had a big nose, and something to do "in the City"!

Mrs. Egerton had approached the Squire on the subject with some fear; but of late he has seemed to take on the character of the chameleon. Ever since that visit to the specialist, indeed, he has been so kind and lenient, that his own people have begun to fear for his health. The fact is that anvthing that will please Vincent is at this moment good for him. Her little sad outbreak of fear and grief had gone to his tough old heart, subduing him-holding him back-so that a blessed immunity from his usual searchings and pryings about the household had been the result. Madge and Mrs. Egerton have joined palms about this. Poor darling Vincent!—but—still—such a blessing, you know!

Even on the subject of Mrs. Deane-Burnes' picnic he has proved himself, if not exactly amenable, at all events open to reason.

"So they wanted to go to this idiotic affair? Did Vincent want to go? Yes! Well—well—they must go, of course; though what they can have in common with that painted, silly, society fool——"

Even Janet, who had never been to a *quite* large, grown-up affair of this kind before, has been nobly permitted to be one of the party. Extreme pressure on the part of Batty—who is now quite a favourite of the Squire's—had led to this.

"She ought to go," said Batty; "she's growing quite countrified! Her manners—have you noticed them?" The Squire paused. "They require a great deal," said Batty, with much solemnity.

The Squire was not so much struck by Janet's delinquencies as by Batty's observations on them, and, seeing no dangers ahead, had given Janet permission to join the party. Batty, having gained his point, did not deem it necessary to tell Janet how he had gained it. He was wise there. One always avoids fireworks, if possible.

The place appointed for the picnic is about five miles from The Court, on the top of the high cliffs that overlook the ocean. Vincent had been looking forward with a sort of wild delight to going there; the grand, sweet, odorous winds of the ocean being very dear to her.

Now, as the people from The Court climb up the side hill that leads to the table-land above, from which a splendid view of the sea lies clear to them for miles and miles and miles, they find themselves in the midst of a small but happy crowd, out of which their hostess, Mrs. Deane-Burnes, emerges.

"So lovely of you to come!" cries she, in her high society tone—a tone now accentuated. "Dear Mrs. Egerton, so good of you."

"Well, we said we'd come," says Mrs. Egerton, smiling gently.

"I know—I know—but that is nothing, is it? Now is it? Not really, you know. No one's word is as good as one's bond nowadays. And who is this charming child?"

She has shaken hands with Madge and Vincent, and Victor Mowbray, who has come with them—with effusion, indeed, with the latter—and is now looking at Janet.

"My third niece," says Mrs. Egerton, a little coldly. She is a gentle, simple woman, but well-born; and to have her nieces "trotted out," as she is sure Mrs. Deane-Barnes would put it, throws her back upon herself.

"Ah! she would create a sensation in town," says Mrs. Deane-Burnes, who means to be intensely agreeable.

Mrs. Egerton looks anxiously round her, hardly knowing how to reply. As she looks she catches Batty's eye.

"I haven't a doubt of it," says that youth, beaming upon Mrs. Deane-Burnes. "The sensations she creates, from hour to hour, even here, would prepare one for anything. And they are all her own; she is distinctly original. As a fact, we seldom know 'where we are' when she is on the scene. Only last week she set fire to the hayshed, and very nearly to me, and——"

"Batty!" cries Janet, indignantly.

"Well! Didn't you?"

"Even if I did—" indignantly. "And now I wish I had. But I didn't. And—"

"Jane!" says Mr. O'Grady, with stern reproach; "are you prepared to swear to that?"

"I'm prepared to swear to this, anyway," says that wrathful maiden, who is the more wrathful in that she has to abuse him under her breath, "that you are hateful—perfectly hateful!"

After which there is neither peace nor honour; but, the belligerents being providentially separated by the passing to and fro of the small crowd around them, bloodshed is avoided. Batty is left by this happy surging of guests close to his hostess.

"How clean the dear country is," Mrs. Deane-Burnes is saying, glancing delicately through her pince-nez at the beautiful fields far away upon the hills. "How calm! How," gushingly, "devoid of soil of any sort."

"You're mistaken," says Batty. "There's a good deal of soil about the country as a rule."

"Oh no, I think not—I hope not!" says Mrs. Deane-Burnes, deprecatingly. All must be good here in this sweet spot."

"Well, there are good and bad specimens every-

where, you know," says Batty, who is beginning to enjoy himself.

"Oh—yes—yes, indeed!" says Mrs. Deane-Burnes, who belongs to several philanthropic societies in town. "But not here—not any bad here. I'm sure!"

"The very worst," says Mr. O'Grady in a deep tone. He bends towards her, and mutters low, "in parts!"

"Dear Mr. O'Grady, this is very sad—very sad, indeed," says Mrs. Deane-Burnes, beginning to look anxious. "I hope I don't know the parts."

"You do, indeed, I regret to say," says Batty, who has been learning farming from the Squire, and who has been over most of the farms round him. "Some are on your own lands."

"You are wrong," says Mrs. Deane-Burnes, with now real agitation, having rather prided herself up to this on her tenantry and their morals; "entirely wrong."

"Ah! you haven't gone into it."

"I assure you I have."

"Not many inches, I think."

"Inches?"

"Of soil."

"Good heavens! what a way of treating it! Do—do you mean to say that—that—Mr. O'Grady—What do you mean?" cries she, suddenly. "What are you talking about? I believe my people to be the best in the world."

"Your people!" Batty grows all at once motionless, as if electrified. "My dear Mrs. Deane-Burnes, what do you mean? what are you talking about?"

"Why, my people, of course; and you?"

"Of your acres!"

Tableau.

"He's such a curious boy," Mrs. Deane-Burnes is saying presently to Mrs. Egerton; "and so comic. I suppose his being Irish, you know—eh?" She smiles at Batty, who, unable to keep away, has returned to Janet's side, but is yet close enough to hear. "He seems very épris with your youngest niece. Eh? She reminds me, do you know, of my eldest girl" (the eldest girl is very nearly thirty). "Have you seen her? The Prince was much struck with her the other day at a bazaar given by the dear Duchess."

In some way this speech seems to incense Batty. Was it the comparing of Janet to Miss Deane-

Burnes? He is evidently on the point of making some extraordinary rejoinder, when Janet, forgeting her late anger, touches his arm, and then lays a finger on her lip.

"Batty, don't be stupid!" says she.

"Oh! it isn't I who am stupid. Did you hear what she said about you and her girl? girl, indeed. Well, come on, Janie. Let's give up the society of our betters and make a day of it. I'll tell you what we'll do, we'll mingle duty with our joys. We'll pluck some of those dear, quaint, rare little sea-pansies that I see growing over there in the sandy soil, and give them to your father on our return to add to his priceless collection. He is fond of pansies, isn't he?"

"Batty! I shan't allow you to make fun or papa," says Janet, with immense dignity—she has hardly yet recovered from her late wrath. In spite of that, however, she wanders off with him along the high cliff that overhangs the "eternal sea," until the moment may arrive when luncheon will be ready.

It goes off very well. So perfect are the arrangements, indeed, that but few of the usual faults occur. This prevents a good deal of the laughter that, as a rule, accompanies these al fresco entertainments. "Beastly dull!" says Batty, with a shrug of his shoulders, to Victor who is near him; but Mowbray is too taken up with Madge, and his anxiety as to whether the lobster salad he has just given her is up to the mark, to be quite an attentive listener. Lobsters are a little out of season. It is almost September.

"It is very nice. It is delicious;" says she, patting the rug beneath her with a pretty invitation in her air. "You have some yourself, so you may as well eat it with me. And we have scarcely had a word up to this."

"And now I have no good word," says he. "Poor old Mason, my uncle's butler, you know, is down with a sort of fever. I can't think what it is; but Dr. Browne speaks of typhoid. I am afraid the drainage is not so good as it might be. He, Browne, you know, has written to my uncle about it, and I expect he'll send some inspector or other. In the meantime, poor Mason suffers; and I can't help thinking that Matt has been looking very down of late."

"Ah, your protégé! I always feel, do you know, Victor, as if I should so like him! His story was

so very romantic, and he always gives me such a pretty bow when I meet him, as if he knew that you—and I——" she gives him a very pretty glance at all events, and a charming smile, and makes no protest when he lays his hand on hers beneath the rug and presses it fondly. "How is he going on?" asks she.

"Splendidly. I am really proud of him. As a rule, protigé is another word for snake—the snake in one's bosom that we have all heard of—but Matt is the great exception. He is looking ill, though, as I tell you. And this fever of Mason's—"

"Oh, it may not be that."

"Of course not," hastily. "And what a horrid topic on such a glorious day as this. Come," taking her hand, "come with me and let us look at the sea together from that big rock over there."

Madge rises.

The rock is in a very secluded spot!

CHAPTER XXI.

"What see you there,
That hath so cowarded and chased your blood
Out of appearance?"

THE light is waning. The first vague touches of evening are hanging on the skirts of day. Hovering above the dying sunset that now is fiercely crimson, are dark banks of clouds, sullen and steel grey. There is no sound upon the air save the soft wash-wash of the waves far down below against the accustomed rocks. It is—

"An eve intensely beautiful; an eve Calm as the slumber of a lovely girl Dreaming of hope."

Tea is over. Batty, having impounded most of the plum-cake, nobly assisted by Janet, is now on his hands and knees beside one of the daughters of the Deane-Burnes house, making a handsome pretence at packing up. Everyone, indeed, seems occupied in this absorbing business, wrapping up plates and dishes in paper with immense care, which the servants, receiving with a respectfully scornful air, take aside, and, having removed the paper, pack them once again.

Tom Brande, coming back from the cosy nook amongst the rocks, where he had sat out the last half-hour alone with his cigar, looks round instinctively for Vincent. With Cedric, no doubt Another glance round, however, shows him Cedric, helping the third Miss Deane-Burnes to do something or other, having been carefully annexed by his hostess for this duty; she, to do her justice, not being aware of his engagement to Vincent. Again Tom glances amongst the groups—but no—there is no Vincent to be seen anywhere. With a dull kind of feeling, that is scarcely fear as yet, but is akin to it, he goes straight to Mrs, Egerton.

- "Where is Vincent?" asks he.
- "With Cedric, I expect."
- "No; he is over there."

Something in his face, that amounts now to almost uncontrollable anxiety, would have betrayed his secret to Mrs. Egerton—if she had not guessed it before.

"She was here almost a moment ago," says she, rising to her feet and gazing nervously around her; "she is with Batty, perhaps, or Madge, or Janet. Oh! no," with a sharp catching of her breath; "I see them all over there!" Her face grows paler—"Oh, Tom!"

"Don't be frightened," says he, though his own face has grown very white. "She has probably gone round there,"—pointing to an abrupt turn to the left that leads round a huge mass of rock to a huge bare sandy plateau.

He leaves her, and, having reached that big projection of rock, disappears behind it. He had gone from her in a leisurely fashion, so as to subdue her fears; but his own fears have grown to such huge proportions, that it is all he can do to keep from running. Once round the corner, he tells himself, he can run; but now that he is round it, he stands still!

Far off—a good two hundred yards away—he can see Vincent moving briskly, lightly, with a little silver-mounted walking-stick in her hand. In some strange way all the others had forgotten her; and the blind girl, grown suddenly happy and courageous, perhaps because of the exhilarating fragrance of the salt sea air that she has always loved—and that has been filling her mouth and senses all this afternoon—had risen a few minutes ago, and, feeling her trusty little stick in her hand, had moved forward, step by step—first slowly—cautionsly—then, as she lifted her delicate head and drew in the sweet keen air, with quicker footsteps, swifter, even swifter—until now—

Now, she is going straight towards the edge of

the cliff over there, that breaks sheer down to the sea, lying fully three hundred feet beneath it!

For one awful moment Brande's heart seems to stand still. A cold moisture breaks out on his forehead. Then he clenches his fists, digs his elbows into his sides, and begins to run. To run! to fly rather! He had made a good name for himself when at Oxford in the running line—beating most of the men of his last year there, but never even then has he run as he is running now!

Time! will there be time? Time to prevent the hurling over that hideous cliff of that slender figure?

He puts out all his speed, and then suddenly stops, with a look on him as if conscious of a sense of astonishment at his own stupidity. She may be eternally blind, but *not deaf*, thank God! and the voice carries farther and swifter than the feet!

"Vincent—Vincent!" he shouts loudly. The wild sea wind that has of late arisen carries his voice to her uncertainly, but through the turmoil of it she hears him. Is it the love in her heart that makes her hear him? or the love in his voice that now madly—if unconsciously—carries itself to her, even over this angry wind? "It is Cedric," she tells herself. But if it had been Cedric, would she have heard?

However it is, she stops, wavers a moment, and then turns. She has evidently grown a little nervous, and stands still as if listening; then again she moves, returning now on the way she has come, as she *believes*, but in reality making for a danger even greater than that from which she has but just now moved aside.

In the round of the cliff of this coast many crevices can be seen, dragging inland here and there, and sometimes for many yards. Towards one of these she is now walking, fully believing she is retracing her steps on the path she had already trodden. How she had ever got round that ghastly chasm on her way over this sea-blown plain can never be known, for she herself cannot tell the tale; but that she is now at this moment approaching it on her return, and will shortly walk *into* it, is plain. Tom, with an accession of agony that nearly chokes him, knows that his cry to her has brought her only nearer to destruction than she had been, when first he saw her on the dangerous coast. A very madness of despair seizes on him.

"Stand still—wait!" he calls to her frantically, though with panting breath. But the sharp sea wind, and the roar of the surf beneath, drown his voice. She is so near to them, and he is so far from her.

And slowly, slowly she draws closer to that yawning chasm. Her walk has grown even quicker, as if she is eager to meet something—someone! Brande instinctively knows that it is he whom she wants to meet—his voice had called her, yet it will be death whose arms will open to her—not his! And what a death!

"Oh, God! have mercy—" The prayer rises to his parched lips. And now—now at last he has rounded that horrible chasm, and is gaining on her; and now he would have cried again some words to her to stop; but his dry lips refuse to utter them.

Step by step she draws near to her doom; now but a yard lies between her and the bare edge. Blood seems to rise before Tom Brande's eyes but still he runs, panting, half mad.

And now she is on the very brink—another moment and she will be over; but in that moment he has flung himself upon the ground—has caught the floating fringes of her skirts, and dragged her by main force backwards on to the bare, sandy, but sure, foundation behind her!

It was a last expedient. Had he rushed forward and caught her while both were in an upright position, so *close* was she to the brink of the precipice that, in all probability, *both* would have swayed over it.

She has struggled to her knees, but now Tom catches her and lifts her to her feet. The frenzy of horror, of despair, and alas! of love, is still on him, and, with a suppressed sob, he strains her to his breast.

"Oh, what is it?" cries she, nervously, with a gasp and a little broken laugh. "Why did you?
—where was I going? Tell me what it is!"

She had not understood the danger—even now she knows nothing of it; but that something is wrong has penetrated to her heart's core; otherwise Cedric would not have been so rough to her. She clings to him in a little frightened fashion, that makes poor Tom's heart beat with a wild misery that had a touch of ecstasy in it that is as bitter as it is sweet.

"Nothing now. Nothing now," whispers he, hoarsely, still holding her to him. He is trembling in every limb; that picture of her falling over that cliff and *crashing* to the rocks below is still before his eyes.

"There was something," says she, a little reproachfully. "I know that, because you are frightened. Your heart is beating; and—and your voice—there is a different ring in it!"

It is the ring of passion, but the poor child does not know that. How should she, who had never heard it before. Cedric's calm, tender, protective affection had had little to do with the deeper, the stronger moods with which Nature endues her children.

He does not answer her.

"Was I——" asks she, faintly, raising herself from his embrace. "Was I going to fall—to fall over?" Her lips tremble, her beautiful sightless eyes uplifted to his, seem, in some sad mystical way, to be searching his. They seem to compel the truth; to drag it out of him.

"Yes," His answer is low and reluctant.

"And you saw? and came to me? A long way off I heard your voice at first. Was I very near——" She shivers, and draws in her breath in a quick, hurried way.

"Why think of it?"

"I must think of it. I like to think of it. And that you came to me, and pulled me back, just when death had me——" She grows very white, then a little smile creeps over her pale, beautiful face. "Ah! what a protector I have!" says she.

So sweetly! so softly! she says it. And then suddenly she lifts her arm and slips it round his neck, and draws his head down to hers, and presses his cheek tenderly against her own.

"I love you," says she.

It was a madness born of the hour, no doubt, but not until this moment has it ever occurred to Tom Brande that she does not know him. He had been thinking of her all through—her only; of her danger—her closeness to death, over which his very soul had shuddered—and her narrow escape. The idea that she believed him anyone but Tom Brande—her friend—her brother—had not so much as crossed his mind.

And now she is holding his head close clasped against her own—and now she has pressed

him from her a little, a very little, way—and the gentle, perfect, pathetic face is looking into his; and almost it seems as if those large clear eyes can sec. She is holding up her face as if *expecting* his kiss.

Everything seems to float away from him—the world—life—his very honour. The pressure of that darling hand around his neck seems to drag him down, and down, and down—lower—ever lower— To Hell as the betrayer of his Love (for what does she know), and as the betrayer of his brother too. He is conscious of a wild desire to defy all laws of honour, all laws of every kind. Hell looms in the distance for him till Heaven is here—— He stoops——

Then all at once Cedric's face seems to come between him and her, and drawing himself up roughly, he pulls her arms from round his neck and holds her back from him.

"Why—don't you know me?" cries he, with a rude forced laugh that seems torn from his very heart-strings; "I am *Tom* Brande; Tom, I tell you—not Cedric!"

There is a sudden silence. All about them the coming storm seems to grow in violence; the sea is beating itself madly against the rocks, and the wind, rushing along the sandy floors in which they stand above, raises them into great sheets of dust.

He had almost flung her arm from him, but now he catches it again, seeing the winds are swaying her, and that her face is as white as death itself.

"Tom!" repeats she, as if remembering. And then—"You are *Tom!*" She grows very silent. "A strange mistake," she breaks out presently. "But your voices; and——" quickly, eagerly, as one might, who is bent on setting herself right, "I said just now that your voice was *different* when you called to me! You remember? You," almost passionately, "do remember?"

"I remember."

"Ah!—it is all so confusing," says she, with a sigh that seems to burst from her. Heaven *alone* knows the thoughts that were in her heart. Then, again, in surely the saddest tone that ever yet was heard: "I wish—I wish I were not blind."

"I wish to God you were not," says Tom, with a sharp burst of rage against fate.

"Perhaps, I shall not always be so," says she in a low tone.

"Perhaps not." Even though the tone is low, so much hope can be heard in it, that he says quickly, "Do not dwell too much on that thought."

"Ah! I live on it."

"You have lived for many years without it."

"That was not life. Now I want to see Cedric—and—you."

"Me!" says he, in a stifled tone. "What am I to you?"

"You are Cedric's brother! And, besides, have you not saved me to-day from——" she catches her breath and in a little frightened way holds out her hands to him—" from death!"

"Tut—that's nothing," says he, bravely, glad and full of courage in that she cannot see the pallor of his face as her dear fingers slip into his once more. "As Cedric's brother I may count, indeed! I always tell him that if he only will, he can get me into Heaven in his train by lending me a few of his virtues. He has so many of his own that he cannot possibly want them all; and I have so few that—"

"Ah, not so few!" interrupts she, sweetly.

CHAPTER XXII.

"What is death but a ceasing to be what we were before? We are kindled and put out, we die daily; nature that begot us, expels us, and a better and a safer place is provided or us."

It is a fortnight later, and the fever that had broken out at Braystown has grown to large proportions, and now is, indeed, raging. Poor Mason, the butler, has succumbed to it, dying with a rather alarming suddenness. He had fallen one evening, after a wonderfully lucid interval, into a state of unconsciousness, out of which he never again awoke. And now Matt, the "young master's" protegé, is down with it.

The fever is indeed spreading, and quite a panic has taken hold of the Mowbray servants. They go about talking in groups and whispering amongst themselves; whilst Victor, with a queer pain at his heart, moves here and there, speaking hopeful words, though feeling no hope himself, as with the doctor he bends over Matt's bed. The lad, indeed, seems dying.

"Typhoid beyond doubt," says the doctor, rais-

ing himself. "Drains bad, I should say. Your uncle should be told."

"I have written to him. I wrote a week ago, but he has not answered,"

"Where is Lord Mowbray now?"

"In Italy."

"His agent, then, should be communicated with, or——"thoughtfully, "why not write to his lawyer, Stamer?"

"I could do that, but I am expecting a letter from my uncle every day. I am surprised he has not answered me, as he is always most careful about his tenants, his estates—his people generally. This attack of typhoid would upset him greatly. I am more distressed than I can say that I have not heard from him about it."

It had, indeed, seemed strange to him, this getting no answer to his letter, which had been urgent, considering all that Mowbray had said to him on his last visit. That had amounted, indeed, to making him his heir; yet his uncle had not written to him personally one word as to the wellbeing of the people of his household, though he must have received word of this fever.

"It seems strange," says the doctor, "but, as you say, you may hear from him by any post. When did you say you wrote?"

"Quite a week ago. He has had, as you see, plenty of time to answer me. But he moves about a good deal, and perhaps he had gone somewhere else before I wrote my letter."

"No doubt," says the doctor.

And indeed Victor had been right in his conclusions. Mowbray *had* gone somewhere else. He had passed into that land from which no return is possible!

The news came next morning! And a week later came still further news to the effect that Lord Mowbray had left every penny unentailed to Paul Swindon. This meant that Victor, in spite of all his uncle had said to him and to others—the Squire amongst them—was practically disinherited. He was the possessor of a title, and very little more. A barren title, to all intents and purposes. It seemed almost impossible to believe at first; but time proved it only too true. A line from Victor to Mr. Stamer brought that eminent solicitor down to Braystown a week after the funeral (the will having been read in London), but he had nothing of good import to say. No; he had heard of no

other will. He was abroad when the late Lord Mowbray was last here, and had had no communication from him since. *The* will, the one leaving all to Paul Swindon, was in his hands. He had written explaining—ahem!—certain things to the late Lord Mowbray a month or two ago, before his lordship's death, but his lordship had taken no notice of it, and—*ahem*!—perhaps things were not altogether so black as—

Mr. Stamer, good man and true, as he undoubtedly is, was nevertheless incapable of forgetting that Swindon, however great a scoundrel, would, in all probability, be a client of his, and, therefore, the less said about him the better.

"It seems strange," said Victor, slowly. "My uncle was hardly the man to say a thing and not mean it."

"I agree with you there; but my dear Lord Mowbray---"

Victor started as if stung.

"Oh, not that!" says he, quickly. "What a mockery! Lord Mowbray with three hundred a year."

"It does seem hard," says Mr. Stamer, with honest sympathy. "Still, what I was going to say was, that whatever your uncle intended doing, I am convinced he died without making a later will. He was always, you know," very gently, and with a lowering of his voice, "a little irregular, a little dilatory, even a little vacillating where business matters were concerned. It is a trial—a great one," says Mr. Stamer, rising and laying his hand very kindly on the young man's shoulder. "But you are only at the beginning of your life, and—""

"Yes, I know." Victor rises and faces him, his handsome eyes gleaming. "It is a little shock, but it shan't overcome me. I have already made up my mind. I shall drop the title."

"My dear Lord Mowbray."

"I mean it. Would I make a laughing-stock of the good old name? I shall drop the title, and go abroad, and," throwing up his head, and smiling bravely, "conquer fortune."

"Fortune is a woman," says Mr. Stamer, admiration growing in him as he looks at the charming, undaunted face before him; "but something tells me she will not be fickle to you!"

Victor laughs rather dismally.

"She's proved herself something of a jade, so far," says he; and then, "Where is Swindon?"

"San Francisco, I think. I cabled to him-when I heard."

The fatal tidings, of course, had spread very fast. The county, indeed, was ringing with it. The Squire had come over on foot to Braystown, and had been, for him, wonderfully friendly, but wonderfully careful, too. Victor had noticed the carefulness through the veneer, and had not been altogether surprised, though certainly cut to the very heart, when a letter from Mr. Grace reached him the evening after the latter's visit. It was suavity itself. It was lengthy-almost apologetic -very sympathetic, and extremely plausible. It was, indeed, everything it ought to be; but only one sentence out of the whole of it clung to Victor's memory. "Under the circumstances you can see that the continuance of your engagement to my daughter is out of the question."

Victor wrote back. It was the letter of a despairing man, but still he kept himself well within bounds. Restraint characterised it. He was glad of that afterwards. He asked only for one year. One year's engagement. He was going abroad. He—this very honestly and without conceit of any kind—believed in himself. Would the Squire grant him one year's grace?

The answer was an uncompromising No.

This shattering of his last hope came on a day that saw Matt struggling painfully for life, at its birth—and saw Paul Swindon's arrival at its death.

Poor Matt—who alone could have helped Victor out of his troubles, and who knows nothing of them—has for the past ten days been fighting for his life with the malignant fever that has seized him. Day by day the delirium had grown fiercer, his pulse lower. His wild, strange, terrible ravings of events connected with his past melancholy life had gone to Victor's heart. Just now he is lying prostrate, almost lifeless, and Victor bending over him tells himself, with a sinking of the heart, that hope is at an end. But the doctor makes him a little sign, and presently a faint sobbing breath, coming from the apparently lifeless body, tells him that there may still be a chance!

It is at this moment that a servant, approaching Victor, whispers hurriedly, apologetically in his ear,

"We heard no ring or knock, my lord, but George says Mr. Swindon is in the library."

CHAPTER XXIII.

"A good sword out of worthless steel can ever any make? Ay, Hakeem! waste no patience for a wicked person's sake, The rain that in its gracious fall did never favour know,. Brings tulips forth in gardens, but makes weeds in swamps to grow."

WORN out, and sad at heart, Victor enters the library. The lamps have been lit, although through the open windows one can see the daylight still gleaming palely on the terraces and lawns; through the conflicting lights he can see, too, a tall heavy figure.

It is the figure of a man standing near the wall a little to the right of the chimney-piece. Of course, it is Paul Swindon. But what on earth is he doing there, standing with his face to the wall. He is quite close to it, indeed, and one of his hands is raised as if feeling it.

In his astonishment Victor makes a quicker movement, and the tall man turns round abruptly—almost convulsively.

"Ah! you," says he; he pauses, and it might perhaps occur to a sharp observer that he is pulling himself together, recovering from a shock as it were. "I must say you didn't hurry yourself."

He is tall and ungainly, distinctly ill-made, indeed, and on the top of his tall figure rests a head much too small for his size. He is florid and very vulgar in appearance; and to add to his iniquities, he carries about with him a smile that he fondly believes to be becoming, but that usually breeds in the minds of his acquaintances—he has no friends—a desire to kick him. Dissipation is stamped deeply on every feature.

"At last?" repeats Victor, coldly. "It was only this moment I heard you were here."

"I found the hall door open," says Swindon, who might have said the window, "and came in here thinking to find you. I rang and rang, but nobody answered me. All gone, perhaps?" with a sneer.

"I am sorry you have been kept waiting, but I fear I must be as deaf as the rest of the household, as I, too, heard no ring."

"Out, perhaps?" suggests Swindon, who had been told that Victor would be at Colonel Eyre's this afternoon, and who had been considerably foiled in a little business he has on hand, and by finding him thus unexpectedly at home.

"No; with one of my servants, who is very ill," returns Victor, briefly.

It is the first time he has been face to face with Swindon for many years. Once or twice as a boy he had met him, and cordially disliked him. If he had fancied at times that the dislike was undeserved—was the mere outcoming of a silly schoolboy's prejudice for this or that—he is now undeceived. During those former meetings, Swindon had seemed to him suave, if vulgar; now all the suavity is gone, and the vulgarity is rampant. There is, too, a rude triumph in his manner not to be misunderstood. It occurs to Victor that he has been drinking.

"One of your servants! 'Pon my soul, I like that. How many does your lordship keep on three hundred a year?"

Victor's blood flames, but he subdues himself.

"For the present those whom my uncle left here."

"Well, they won't be here long—ch? About as long as you'll be. You'll have to clear out of this yourself soon—ch?"

"That is my own affair," says Victor, still with superb restraint. "However, I presume you have not come this evening merely to speak of my servants. What is your business?"

"Why, about the clearing out, of course," says Swindon, who has had time to formulate a story. "You'll want to let this house—eh? Ha—ha——" He straddles his legs on the hearthrug and laughs aloud. "What a sell for you—eh? Thought to oust me out of the rhino—to have it all your own way—but luck's gone bad, you see. It's my turn now, and, by George, I shouldn't advise you to expect any mercy at my hands. Snivellers like you should go to the wall—and to the wall you've gone! You've had your day, my immaculate cousin, but I come in, hands down, at the end."

"You are my uncle's heir," say Victor, calmly looking him contemptuously up and down. "But, in spite of that, I should like to remind you that you are in my house."

"Your house! Fine airs, by Jove! My lord! with three hundred a year! Well, look here, now I'm not spiteful, you know; I bear no malice. Though I'm quite aware that you did your level best to smash me with the old man, and to do me out of the money he left me, I don't blame you,

you see, for the simple reason that I'd have done the same myself."

He pauses—and leaning forward begins to bite his nails—a favourite recreation of his. In this way he fails to see the look of disgust that crosses Victor's face.

"You bring me up to what I have to say," says he presently. "My house, as your lordship—ha, ha—calls it, can't be of very much use to you under the present circumstances. Three hundred a year, you know, doesn't run far. Therefore, it seems to me a reasonable thing, that as I have the money, and you have only the husks, you might as well rent the old place to me—eh?"

"No," says Victor, sharply—quickly. It is a discourteous answer, and after a moment he acknowledges this and goes on again. "As a fact I have not made up my mind about letting this place to anybody."

"Oh! there is a question about it then? Well—as I am first—may I hope that you will give me the preference."

"No," says Victor again and this time decidedly. He has lost all sense of discourtesy. He feels raging! No never. He will not give the grand old place and its pure memories into the hands of a reprobate like this.

"What the devil do you mean?" asked Swindon, coarsely.

"Only what I say. If I have to find a tenant for this house it will not be you." He has risen, and is staring Swindon fair in the face.

"And why, may I ask?"

"It is not necessary to go into it."

"I say it is! Confound you for a fool," says Swindon, violently. "Do you believe I'm going to stand this?"

There is a spring forward on Swindon's part—an alert movement on Victor's—and then a closing and a sharp struggle.

Naturally, the victory goes to the man trained—young—sober in every sense; and when Swindon rises from the corner into which he has been flung, Victor points to the window.

"Go," says he, his eyes flashing.

Swindon looks at him, and then, as if compelled, moves towards the window.

"I am going," snarls he; "but mark this, Mowbray, I'll come back again! You'll have to let

this house, and I'll outbid all bidders; and when I'm master here——"

"Go!" says Victor again. His face is now very white—it is also contemptuous. The contempt seems to enter into Swindon's brain (one had nearly said his soul), and enrages him.

"Take care, take care," says he. Standing on the ledge of the window (well out of reach, by the way) he shakes his fist at Victor, "I have you in the hollow of my hand, you fool, and there I'll keep you."

He is gone now, through the softly-dying daylight—the more softly coming night. Victor, feeling a little stunned, stands still a moment, running his hand slowly over his head. What had the brute been doing when he stood at that wall there? Going up to it quickly, he gazes narrowly at it. Nothing but roses and lilies delicately painted by some old painter's hand, and now yellowing as time goes by. Strange his standing like that! And then his last words, "I have you in the hollow of my hand." Pshaw! what rubbish the whole thing is. A paltry bit of bombast—a theatrical outburst quite in keeping with the man himself.

He is conscious, however, of a sense of unrest, a longing for movement. The grand calm night outside attracts him to it, with its faint winds and silvery stars, and the sad, sweet moaning of the wayes from far away.

"With stars and sea-winds in her raiment, Night sinks on the sea."

The open window draws him. And then comes a side-thought. Matt! how is he now? He slips down quickly to the sick lad's room, to find him sleeping peaceably. Though looking spent and worn to the point of death, he still has something of the hue of life upon his wan features; and, perhaps, after many days he may yet walk upon this earth again.

And now—now he is in the open air at last with the sky "thickly strewn with silver stars" above his head. The joy of swift motion takes hold of him, and he begins to walk faster, ever faster. Oh, the delight of it—the bare physical charm of it. It dominates him so entirely that it is only after he has pressed on and upwards for three miles or so that he wakes to wonder where he is, and finds himself on the top of the Bigley Hill, that commands a splendid view of the ocean, and runs straight down to the gates of "The Court." The soft dews

of the night, mingled with the faint uprising mists of the sea, rest refreshingly with a little soft savour on his lips, giving him strength, whilst below on the broad bosom of the ocean lies the white, silvery, tremulous shadow of the moon, now sinking, now rising.

This vast great sea that nothing can move or change steadies him. Presently he runs down the hill again with a view to going homewards, but at the end of it lie the gates of The Court, and there, leaning against them, looking pensively through the bars, is Madge!

CHAPTER XXIV.

"The strange winds sigh above
The bending trees;
And strange and sad day's love
May follow these.
What care we, darling, now,
Since love, sweet love is onrs,
For Winter blasts that rob
The Summer flowers."

"Is that you, Madge?"

"Oh, is that you?" A happy light springs into the girl's eyes. "Victor! to think of your being here to-night!"

"Why should you not think of it? Do you know that I have been here last night and the night before—ah! and at your window, too."

"Oh, oh!" whispers she. She stretches out her hands to him through the bars, and he takes them, kissing them tenderly.

"Let me in," says he, in a whisper.

"I can't. Don't you know that father has the gate locked at eight sharp? No; we must just see each other like this—as though we were criminals—through prison-bars."

"Stone walls do not a prison make, Nor iron bars a cage,"

quotes Victor, with a vigour that sounds to Madge to have a certain frivolity in it.

"Ah! you can laugh," says she.

"I can do more than that," retorts he, "I can climb." And lo! before she has time to be afraid for him, because of those spiked barbs above, he is at her side. It takes but a moment after this to find that their arms are round each other.

"Oh! but it is hopeless! hopeless!" sobs she, presently; "father will never give his consent."

"I know that. His letters-his last letter-left

that beyond doubt. You know what I told him, that I was going abroad to seek my fortune—and yours. He would not listen. But you, Madge, you will listen. You will wait for me? It seems selfish to ask it, but after all I don't believe it is, because I shall get on, darling, I know it! I shall conquer fortune."

"I don't care about fortune," says the girl, with a little sob in her throat.

"Oh! but I do, when it is for you—for you. And if you care for me, as I care for you, my dearest, you will not mind waiting, because I could not be happy without you, and you——"

He stops as if for an answer, but the clinging of her arms around his neck is one so eloquent that no man could have desired a greater.

"Your father, I know, will not countenance me in any way."

"Ah! I shall never forgive him that! Never! To send such a letter to you."

"Perhaps he was right," says Victor, gloomily—and then—" No, he was not. He," passionately, "was wrong! He should have given me my chance. He should have heard me. A year—a year only out of our lives was all I asked. If after that I was not in a position to claim you—or, at all events, on the road to it—then, he might have cast me off! But a year of separation between you and me would not have been much out of our lives, when we are so young. Just from this month to this month next year—not so much after all, Madge."

But she does not seem to see it in this light. All at once, to his grief and horror, she bursts into tears.

"Oh! It is; it is," cries she. "A year! A whole year! Twelve horrible long months. I don't think you can love me as I love you, when you speak so lightly of it."

"How can you speak to me like that?" His arms tighten round her now. "How can you hurt me so? Don't you know how it is with me. That my heart is breaking when I think of leaving you."

"Forgive me," cries she, clinging to him. "But so many sorrows coming together——— Do you know that to-morrow is the day for the operation on Vincent's eyes?"

"Yes, I heard," says he, sadly. "I pray God it may be successful. I shall be here long enough to hear about the result before I sail."

"Before you sail—?" Her tone is startled. She stands back from him; her hands pressed against her heart.

"I go in a week," says he in a low voice.

"Oh, not so soon!" cries she. Bitter weeping overtakes her, and she leans sobbing on his breast.

"The sooner I go the sooner I shall be back," whispers he, pressing her face against his, and striving to drag some comfort out of their mutual misery. "But a year!" He had been bent once again on making small of that round period, but suddenly his courage fails him. "A year! oh, you are right! It is a long time—a lifetime often—Madge, darling, you will not forget me? You," in agonised tones, "will wait for me?"

"Forget!—What do you take me for? Ah! is that what you will do? But," with a view to casting coals of fire upon his head, "do not think I distrust you. No, no, indeed"; with a faint undoing of her last speech. "However it may be with you, I shall wait—and wait—and think, and think, of you, and you only, until you come back to me again."

There is something in the steadfast glance of her eyes that convinces him of the truth of her words. Yes, she will wait for him, long for him, year by year, and cling to him only, "Though faither an' mither an' a' should go mad."

"Oh, Madge!" cries he, suddenly slipping his young arms round her; "what a darling you are!

But don't talk of distrust—an ill word, dearest, and an unjust one. There is but a single thought in life for me, and that is you!"

" And yet you will go away and leave me," says she, reproachfully.

"You know why I go! If I did not—how could I ever hope to see you again. And do you think I want to go?—But go I must, for all that."

"In a week?" A little sob breaks from her again. "Then this is good-bye?"

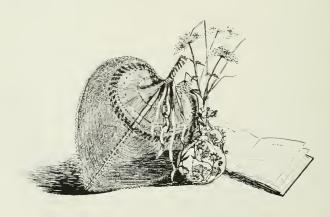
"Oh, no! I must see you again," exclaims he miscrably. "Surely your father is not so bitter against me because of misfortunes, as to deny me one last meeting with you? I will not believe it. But even if it were true, Madge——"

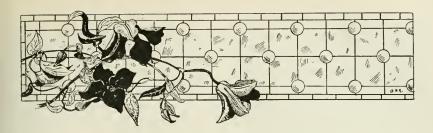
He is holding her hands in his, as if his life depended on their small strength, and is looking earnestly through the moonlight into her face.

"Even if he did refuse, you would be true. You would not fail me. You would meet me again?"

"I shall never fail you," says she, with all the solemnity of a first young love. "I shall see you again before you go—be sure of that, Victor. Be sure, too——" she breaks down here, and all the solemnity goes to the winds. In a moment he finds her arms around his neck, her cheek against his. "A week, a week!" sobs she. "Oh! what shall I do? what shall I do?"

(To be continued.)





OCCUPATIONS FOR GENTLEWOMEN.

IV.-MUSIC: HINTS BY LUIGI DENZA.

By the Baroness von Zedlitz.

THE development of musical culture has never been more apparent in England than at the present moment; for English wives and daughters are no longer idealists, content to dream of what distinctions they might possibly achieve in their beloved art, but their earnest desires in the direction of electing music as the chief charm and attraction of their homes have assumed a practical form, and the elevating influence of this particular art is making itself felt more and more daily in the hearts and homes of the people.

The production of the voice is, however, a lengthy and troublesome problem, and one which must be carefully and untiringly studied. One of the most important essentials to be aimed at and achieved in the study of singing, is a clear pronunciation of speech. As a rule, we are not strict enough with regard to articulation; consequently, the tone-production is veiled and faulty, while beginners of singing are surprised to discover that they have never really learnt to speak. The subject of "Analysis of Language" has been exhaustively treated by Professor Max Müller, and very critically entered into by Mr. Ellis in "Speech and Song;" and all would-be singers would do well to bestow special study upon the works in question.

As an occupation for gentlewomen, music is alike fascinating and attractive. Not only do singing and music add singular charm to the individuality of the students, but the former also contributes considerably to the health and vigour of the constitution. It is a well-known fact that the ancient Greeks considered the development of the voice a part of the proper education of every student, and essential to

health; therefore, the advisability of imitating the Athenians by establishing classes for voicetraining on scientific principles, is earnestly commended to those in authority in English Universities, and in the musical and theological colleges.

Intending vocalists should not commence to study singing seriously until they have reached the age of sixteen, for the voice, if strained before it is mature, will not be strong enough to resist the wear and tear of prolonged study.

Another important point in learning to sing is that the student must be fond of her art, and that she must possess musical instinct, and an inborn predilection for music. She must not allow herself to be forced into studying, unless the achievement of proficiency as composer or executant be the wish of her heart. How often we come across beautiful voices which, clear as a bell, and true to the note, awaken no sympathy within our souls, for the simple reason that, though the organ is there, the fundamental knowledge, as well as the inclination requisite for its adequate development, is wanting; hence, the singer reaches a certain point, hampered by ignorance and lack of vocation, and can proceed no further.

Musical talent requires more than the oral sense; it demands an ardent susceptibility to the charm of musical sound. Pupils should work in order to obtain quality and sweetness of tone; the power and strength will follow by the action of natural laws.

Of the five languages to which the largest amount of vocal music has been composed, namely, Italian, Latin, French, German and English, the last-named shows the most marked difference between singing and speaking, whereas Italian

takes the first position as having the purest vocal sounds and the largest amount of vowel. Latin follows next; its vowels are identical in pronunciation with those of Italian, but it carries more consonants. French takes the third place, for a great quality in its language, when sung, is that its amount of vocal sound is always at the same average. German and English possess so many sounded consonants that, in the case of the former, there is barely time to make the vowels heard. English requires more careful analysis than any other language before it can be sung on account of its peculiar vowel-sounds, abundance of sibilation, and irregularity of orthography, consequent upon its many derivations; therefore, it is most essential that the pupil, when learning to sing, should lay great stress on the clear and articulate pronunciation of her words when singing in English.

Let no pupil attempt to learn singing of an indifferent master; it is one of the most injurious mistakes that can be made. The student can do nothing alone. She requires to have an adequate guide from the very beginning, and, when the voice is pretty well lance, she can better afford to make progress alone than to take the advice of a vocal teacher who is not au fait in his art. The study of vocal physiology is one of the essential duties of the singing master, for the natural laws governing the vocal organs, which, in their turn, are the most delicate and vital of all, are subjects which should be conscientiously gone into, until a thorough fundamental knowledge of the same has been achieved.

Unfortunately, the proper amount of attention is rarely given to fundamental training; consequently it is often discovered by singers, and particularly speakers, that they have not used the vocal forgan rightly, and that they are compelled to look for that guidance midway in their career which should have been shown to them in the infancy of their apprenticeship to art.

For beginners, one of the countless books which have been published on the subject of vocalisation and voice training is that of Alberto Randegger, and is warmly recommended by all *connoisseurs*. It is lucid and plain in its explanations, and gives much wise and able instruction. For more advanced pupils, "The Solfeggi," by Concone and Panofka, as well as the books by Nava, Bordogna, and Garcia are highly commendable.

Students should not fail to sing in classes as much as possible, when trios, duets, &c., are to be exercised, and the constant, or at least regular, singing of church music should instil a solidity of style from the very commencement, which will bear good fruit in after years. When the student has arrived at a sufficiently advanced stage of vocal training to permit of her singing operatic music, she should bear in mind that simple melodies are those which should be sung, and in the Italian language if possible.

It is a great mistake to rush into the operatic style of florid vocalisation, unless an absolute perfection of agility has been acquired; for there is nothing so tiring to singer and listener alike as a lame and inadequate attempt to interpret elaborate music.

Mozart, Schubert, Schumann, Tosti, Gounod, Rubinstein, Ambroise Thomas, and many other celebrated composers, have given us the most poeti cal and beautiful melodies ever written, doubly entrancing to a musicianly and sensitive nature by reason of their wonderful simplicity and elegance of style. Such music as this should be judiciously selected by teacher or student, while all other elaborately decorative music should be carefully avoided during the commencement of a singer's career. Above all advice stands first and foremost the following: -The only advancement possible lies in the efforts of the pupil herself; therefore, she must work with a fixed determination to achieve those points of excellence which her energies alone can call forth. She should strive to produce pure intonation and an even, smooth tone-production; her undivided attention should be devoted to her study, and she should always think of what she is

An example of the slovenly way in which some young ladies go through the mere form of practising, without giving any thought to the progress of their studies, is presented in the following story told by Signor Denza:—

"A rather backward pupil of mine had not been making the progress I expected to find, and I remonstrated with her on the subject, and reproved her with making the same mistake every time she sang a particular exercise. The young lady was quite frank in her avowal that she was really so weary of those tiresome études, that she had to resort to an interesting novel while practising."

The artifice of respiration should be so deftly manipulated, that it were hard to discover when the breath renews itself; inspiration and expiration should be as simultaneous as the filling of a cup with one hand while emptying it with the other.

The singer's breathing corresponds to the violin player's bowing, and requires as much practising; as soon as a complete control over the student's breathing has been accomplished, she may consider that she has acquired a firm hold on her voice. The inspiration must be slow and deep, the expiration gradual and complete. Lung gymnastics, although highly recommended, should be practised in moderation; infinite harm may be caused by overdoing them, whereas singing on a right method of breathing will often strengthen weak lungs. Regularity in this matter is of the utmost importance, and if conscientiously practised, it will increase the breathing capacity, improve the voice, make speaking and singing easy, and will cure that big evil-tremolo, or a vibrating production. It is necessary to bear in mind that every tone should be clearly and distinctly rendered, although each must be in unison with the other, and of perfect intonation. It is better to try to sing distinctly and slowly than quickly and indistinctly. Students of singing are often apt to look upon the flexibility of the voice as a natural gift, and are reluctant to submit to a routine of discipline; some voices are, of course, more flexible than others, but all can acquire nimbleness and brilliancy if the students will only make up their minds to work.

* * * *

Lovers of music who choose to turn their minds to the subject of composition must, of course, devote a very large share of their time to the study of musical science, harmony and counterpoint. It has been generally admitted that unless musical ideas appear in the mind sufficiently clearly to dispense with the aid of an instrument at first, nothing very striking or praiseworthy will ever be achieved. It is very certain, at all events, that in composition, like all other branches of music, the fundamental knowledge must be exhaustively studied, and the drudgery of fugue and counterpoint, &c., which our great masters before us patiently waded through, must be intelligently and unflinchingly attacked by aspirants to composition. Nothing more delightful can be said to a young composer than that her work displays talent and originality

and that she has succeeded in giving a true reflection in musical expression of the words she has chosen to set. In order to deserve such praise she must possess ability, industry, knowledge, feeling and taste, wherewith to develop her style and method, and perseverance in the direction of thoroughly mastering the rudiments of her art.

Melody is the language of the sentiments-that which inspires our reverence, our admiration, and our sense and appreciation of art's beauty, but in order to thoroughly do it justice the composer must possess an inborn faculty for extemporization; she must not merely wander over the key-board while letting her fingers drift in an aimless, disjointed fashion, but she must bear in her mind a clear and definite plan of what she proposes to create. Signor Denza highly recommends the following able books by well-known and experienced writers on the subject. For the study of harmony, Sir John Stainer, Dr. Wylde, and Mr. C. A. Trew have supplied valuable information in a simple. clear form for beginners; while Dr. Bridge, Ebenezer Prout, and Sir G. Macfarren have contributed excellent works on counterpoint. number of distinct schools of composition which exist is too great to enumerate, but it is clear that the Flemish school was the first to show any sort of creative genius which exercised a really lasting influence upon art. Its composers really discovered those harmonic combinations which have been claimed as common property by all succeeding schools; but unfortunately with these discoveries their efforts ceased.

Their melodies were of the simplest, crudest kind, poorly clad with such harmonies as they were able to improvise without much exertion.

This, however, is not what I wish to dwell upon; let me rather impress upon the young composer the fact that she must use her utmost power to please the ear as well as the understanding, and that she must utilise learning in order to produce harmonious effects. She must, moreover, strive to create intellectual melodies, simple at the outset, which creative outcome of thought will necessarily give the reflex of individual temperament.

If the musician be of a mournful, silent disposition, her compositions are likely to become imbued with a melancholy strain; whereas the works of a merry, laughing person are sure to exhibit a vivacious, lively tendency of expression.

The budding talent of youthful composers should

be sympathetically encouraged and stimulated by frequent judicious extemporisation on the piano; should the musician have a view to setting words to music, the words should be committed to memory, for then possibly musical ideas of a suitable nature will present themselves.

In a facsimile of one of Beethoven's sketchbooks, it has been shown that the great master immediately jotted down any musical ideas which entered his head when on his rambles, in the club, or even in bed. Mozart, we are told, did not use such aids. He, on the other hand, worked out whole sonatas, symphonies, and other large works in his mind's eye, and only when he had completed the compositions entirely to his satisfaction did he write down the notes.

Brahms, the greatest of living German composers, is said to possess a like power. In selecting a model by which to aid an untutored mind in composition, it would be advisable that every student should carefully follow the uniquely accurate and delicate works of John Sebastian Bach, the finest of all exponents of mathematical music, and most prolific creator of organic melodies. It is a well-known fact that all great composers who followed closely in his steps, Handel and even Wagner included, modelled their productions imitatively on the lines of his sublimely original masterpieces.

To give one or two instances, it were *dpropos* to mention the fugues in Handel's oratorios, the chorales in Mozart's Masses, and finally the orchestral music in Wagner's "Meistersinger," which in each case show an unmistakable resemblance to Bach's contrapuntal method.

For laying the foundations of symmetrical and exactly balanced musical edifices, which are at once beautiful in form and stately in dimensions, Bach in Germany and Palestrina in Italy are unapproachable.

Another counsel to beginners is that an excellent point of judgment is arrived at by noting the idea that has been created without having recourse to the instrument, and then it will be shown whether the musical effect is what it was intended to be. A fresh, intelligent mind will always welcome the comprehension of the ideal, and it is generally to such efforts that composers owe the start of their genius and such knowledge as they are afterwards in a position to acquire.

Music cannot be dealt with too seriously; its province is creation, for it generates musical thought, of which the central ideas are conception and expression. It has, perhaps, not always been the least cultivated of arts, but it is now raising its head proudly, being no longer neglected in favour of its other sisters.

In the contemplation of ourselves, music reflects our purest and best qualities. It is the mysterious power that subdues our sorrows and enhances our joys, and is a language which begins where speech ends. The vocation of every composer, like that of a poet, is to give expression to joy, and even oftener to sadness; therefore, she must merge her life and thought into the entity of music from its very inception, and follow its development by examining the special characteristics of the great musicians, and the influence which they brought to bear on their particular and several epochs. Then music will rouse the human nature and call forth its finest emotions.

Composition can be controlled by rules, and some laid down by the early masters were so marvellously well devised, that they are even now unshaken; but no rules, strictly speaking, can be laid down for composition. Musical art, having passed through phases of idealism and romanticism, has now reached the stage of realism and materialism; therefore, the modern tendency is to write what one feels, just as one feels it.

And now, in conclusion of this musical word sketch, there is but one more point I wish to impress on the minds of young composers. Endeavour to penetrate by sympathetic attention the priceless instruction which the great masters of the past have bequeathed to you; listen to what they have to tell, and try to follow in their footsteps while gathering each little simple flower of knowledge they have planted on their lives' path.

It is to be hoped that these messages from the dead will be cherished by you as they deserve to be, and that music will creep into your hearts and take such firm root there that it will never for a moment be absent from your minds.

Remember that music resembles your pet bird, whom you keep in a gilded cage and fondle and guard. If you feed it continually, speak to it and cherish it, the little flutterer will respond and open out its wings in loving thankfulness to its benefactor; if, however, you starve and neglect it, or treat it harshly and unsympathetically, it will become mute and sorrowful, until the poor tired head will droop; and finally the bird will die.



AUTHORS' COUNTIES.

VI.—CUMBERLAND AND THE ISLE OF MAN: HALL CAINE.

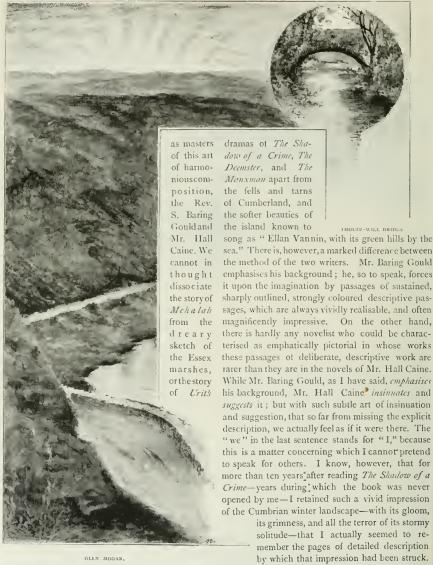
By James Ashcroft Noble.

EVERY novelist requires a background, or rather successive backgrounds, of landscape and interior, for the same reason that the dramatist requires the scenery and appointments of the stage. Dialogue and costume may suffice to fix and steady the interest by indicating the time of the action, but due realisation of its locality is often not less essential to full imaginative comprehension and enjoyment; and for the achievement of this realisation the novelist has to depend upon his own descriptive powers, just as the dramatist has to depend upon the knowledge and skill of the scene-painter and the stage-carpenter. Background and narrative, scenery and action, are all in varying degrees essential to the totality of impression and effect.

In varying degrees, I say, for every reader of fiction must have noticed that among novelists (and it is with a novelist that I am now concerned) there is a marked difference in so far as this special

matter is concerned. There are writers who take almost as much trouble with their background as with the story of action or emotion which is evolved in front of it. There are others who concentrate themselves upon the story, and are content with a simple indication of what lies behind. Nor is thisall, for the first class may also be sub-divided intothose novelists to whom the background is a merebackground and nothing more—a simple decorative addition to the story-and certain other writerswhose work is so complete a unity that the background is an integral and indisputable part of it, so that we say to ourselves: "These things could not have happened, or, at any rate, they could not have happened just in the same way, in different surroundings than those which have been chosen for them."

There are two living novelists who—whatever may be the other qualities of this work—are conspicuous



from the wild Dartmoor expanse ot heather; and no more is it possible to consider the narrative

When I returned to the story a month or two ago, what was my surprise to discover that these



SULBY GLEN.

memories were among the illusions of imagination; that there were, speaking broadly and not au pied de la lettre, no such passages as those which haunted my recollection; but that the novelist, with an instinctive and subtle artistic economy, had rendered his realisation of the landscape by an ac-

cumulation of hints and passing allusions, which separately counted for little, but in the mass produced just the pictorial effect that I have endeavoured to indicate.

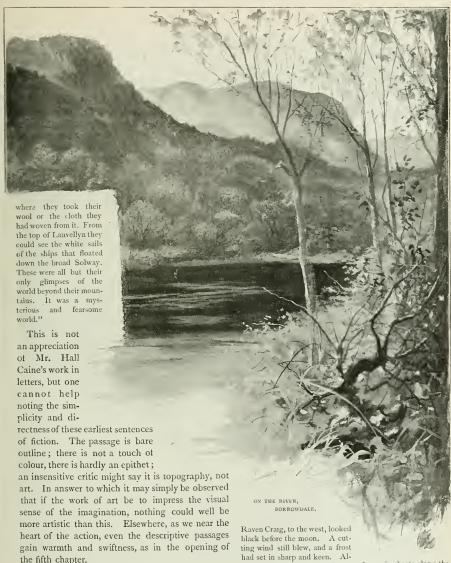
For this reason one has not the quotable aid to a survey of Mr. Hall Caine's Lake-land, that one would have to a survey of Mr. Baring Gould's Essex or Dartmoor. If the reader says: "Show me examples of Mr. Hall Caine's power as a painter of Cumbrian scenery," a writer might well reply, "It is im-

possible; you must read The Shadow of a Crime, and judge for yourself." And yet there is something to be said, even of so elusive a pictorial method; for what it renders it renders distinctly, with none of the smudginess of recent impressionism. The character of the landscape which is to dominate the story—the landscape of Thirlmere vale in rough, sombre, winter weatheris indicated in the simple opening description of Wythburn. Wythburn itself is not a spot of special beauty or interest, and will be remembered by the ordinary coaching tourist simply as an elevated, bare, and unattractive hamlet at which, on the journey from Ambleside to Keswick, a halt of a few minutes is made after the long ascent of Dunmail Raise. And yet this quality of simple barrenness and remoteness is what makes the scene so admirable as a starting-point.

"The city of Wythburn stood in a narrow valley at the



foot of Lauvellyn, and at the head of Bracken Water. It was a little, but populous village, inhabited chiefly by sheepfarmers, whose flocks grazed on the neighbouring hills. It contained rather less than a hundred houses, all deepthatched and thick-walled. To the north lay the Mere, a long and irregular water, which was belted across the middle by an old Roman bridge of boulders. A bare pack-horse road wound its way on the west, and stretched out of sight to the north and the south. On this road, about half-amile within the southernmost extremity of Bracken Water, two hillocks met, leaving a natural opening between them, and a path that went up to where the city stood. The dalesmen called the clift between the hillocks 'the city gates'; but why the gates and why the city none could rightly say. Folks had always given them these names. The wiser heads shook gravely as they told you that 'city' should be 'sarnty,' meaning the house by the causeway. The historians of the plain could say no more. They were rude sons and daughters of the hills who inhabited this mountain home two centuries ago. They had few channels of communication with the world without. The pack-borse pedlar was their swiftest newsman; the pedlar on foot was their weekly budget. Five miles along the pack-horse road to the north stood their market town of Gaskarth,



"The storm was now all but over. The moon shone clear, and the clouds that scudded across its face were few. Lauvellyn, to the east, was visible to the summit; and ready the sleet that had fallen was frozen in sheets along the road, which was thereby made almost impassable even to the sure footsteps of the mountaineer. The trees no longer sighed and moaned with the wind; on the stiffening firs lay

beads of frozen snow, and the wind, as it passed through them, soughed. The ghylls were fuller and louder, and seemed to come from every hill; the gullocks overflowed, out silence was stealing over the streams, and the deeper rivers seemed scarcely to flow."

Winter visitors to Lake-land are not numerous, for people do not know what is good for them; but those who have stood in the night silence of the fells, when a mountain storm has died away to quiet, will feel how intimately Mr. Hall Caine has rendered the very spirit of the scene. I think, however, there can be no possible doubt that the passages in which we are taken out on to the Styehead Pass to witness that grim funeral procession, with its one ghastly incident of the runaway coffin-bearing horse, are Mr. Caine's great triumphs in the realisation of Cumbrian landscape. Of course, he has here a magnificent subject. Just as Borrowdale has more bewitching tenderness of beauty than perhaps any other Lakeland valley. so Stychead Pass, among a dozen neighbouring mountain pathways, all bare, grim, sombre, aweinspiring, has always seemed to me to be informed by a quite unique bareness, grimness, sombreness, awfulness. These impressions are, in some degree, stamped upon the sensibility of the wayfarer, even during the hours of a sunny summer noon; but in the few gloomy hours of a storm-swept wintry day they are simply overpowering. Here, however, the idiosyncrasy of Mr. Hall Caine's treatment, which has been previously noted, makes itself manifest. The vision of the gloomy pass, and of the horse flying with its ghastly burden, seems to be always with us as we read; but as a matter of fact it comes and goes, as the details of a landscape in a thunder-storm at night make themselves distinctly manifest only in the instant of each flash. and yet are felt to be there during the intervals of blackness. Those portions and aspects of the lake country which impress by simple grandeur or tenderness of beauty, have attracted many artists of brush and pen. Mr. Hall Caine is almost, if not quite, alone in rendering the bareness and terror of its bare and terrible places under conditions by which these qualities are accentuated and emphasised. He is the Salvator Rosa of Lake-land.

A landscape which impresses the beholder less by its isolated grandeurs than by its constant variety of gentler beauty, provides a background for the two famous Manx novels; and the artistic sensibility of the writer, quickened by use, responds readily to the more complicated demand made upon it. To the urban thousands of Liverpool and Manchester the Isle of Man—at any rate, some portions of it—is as familiar as are the streets and suburbs of their own cities; but to Londoners and dwellers in southern and eastern England it is practically a terra incognita, and



none but those can tell how much these lose by their ignorance. It is a marvellous little island. Mountain heights, lovely clefts of fairy-like glen or bolder ravine, each with its tumbling, swirling little stream, precipitous craggy coastline, and little patches of tender pastoral country, are all crowded within its narrow limits, and everywhere around it the wonder and fascination of the green, lucent sea. And there is no one of these features of natural beauty which is not celebrated again and



again with effusion and yet exquisiteness of loving appreciation in the pages of The Deemster and The Manyman. Professor Knight has proved most delightfully that the poems of Wordsworth are the best of all written introductions to the English lake-country, and it is not one whit less certain that these romances are the most winning credentials to the charms of Ellan Vannin. From the bare little-visited Point of Avre at the extreme north to the islet of the Calf at the rock-bound coast of the south, from eastern Douglas and Ramsey to the western verge, where Peel town and castle sleep in summer sunshine, or stand victoriously the stress of winter storm, there is hardly a spot likely to dwell in the memory of the Manxland wayfarer which these stories-to use a good old word-do not "memorise." Most often, in harmony with the gloomful story, the landscape takes a sombre expression, as in the little vignette of the cottage of the Kerruishes-" a lone place, on the top of a bare heath, with the bleak sea in front, and the purple hills behind, and with a fenceless cart track leading up to it"-or the description of the surroundings of the fateful meeting of Dan and Ewan on Orris Head-the exposed treeless spot, with low-hanging sky, and sharp declivity of steep red cliffs to the lonesome shore, where "above their heads the sea-fowl kept up a wild clamour, and far out, where sea and sky seemed to meet in the gathering darkness, the sea's steady blow on the bare rocks of the maze sent up a deep, hoarse boom."

Still the very same objects—sea and shore and clustering seabirds—provide the materials for brighter summer pictures, such as that of Peel in one of the earlier chapters of *The Manxman*.

"It was a beautiful day; the sun was shining, and the bay was blue and flat and quiet. The tide was down, the harbour was empty of water, but full of smacks with hanging sails, and hammocks of nets, and lines of mollags (bladders) up to the mast-heads. A flight of seagulls were fishing in the mud, and swirling through the brown wings of the boats and crying. A flag floated over the ruins of the castle, the church bells were ringing, and the harbour masters were abroad in best blue and gold buttons."

It is very simple—wholly devoid of elaboration—and yet it renders the very spirit of the scene; and the little picture of the beautiful Sulby Glen, later on in the same book, though very different in treatment, is not less successful.

"Sulby Glen is winding, soft, rich, sweet, and exquisitely beautiful. A thin thread of blue water, laughing, babbling, brawling, whooping, leaping, gliding, and stealing down from the mountains; great boulders, worn smooth and ploughed hollow by the wash of ages; wet moss and lichen on the channel walls; deep, cool dubbs; tiny reefs; little cascades of boiling foam; lines of trees like sentinels on either side, making the light dim through the overshadowing leafage; gaunt trunks torn up by winds and thrown across the stream with their heads to the feet of their fellows; the golden fuchsia here, the green trammon there; now and again a poor old tholthan, a roofless house, with grass growing on its kitchen floor; and over all the sun peering down with a hundred eyes into the dark and slumberous gloom, and the breeze singing somewhere up in the tree-tops to the voice of the river below."

Four years ago the writer of these pages spent a few weeks of early autumn at the head of the less impressively romantic, but still beantiful, Glen Aldyn, within an easy walk of the glen and pretty village of Sulby; and his memory still holds a distinct impression of the multiplicity and mystery of beauty which tempted the novelist to make one of the most carefully finished and minutely realisable of all his studies of Manx landscape. But, as I have said more than once, it is Mr. Hall Caine's constant habit so to render the external features of any scene that he shall at the same time render still more intimately the human experience and emotion with which it is tor the moment associated; and though in sustained dramatic power and pathos The Manxman must be regarded as an advance upon The Deemster, I think it probable that if ten readers were asked to name the one descriptive passage in the author's work which haunts most persistently the imagination and memory, nine of them would go back to the earlier book, and would name the scene in which Dan Mylrea leaves behind him the gazing crowd in the valley, slowly climbs the mountain on his way to life-long exile, and disappears over the ridge of the summit.

"The smoke still rose in a long blue column from the side of Greeba, and the heavy cloud that had hung at poise over the head of Sliean Whallin had changed its shape to the outlines of a mighty bird, luminous as a sea gull, but of a sickly saffron. Over the long line of sea and sky to the west the streak of red that had burned duskily, had also changed to a dull phosphoric light, that sent eastward over the sky's low roof a misty glow. And while the people watched the lonely man who moved away from them across the breast of the hill, a pale sheet of lightning without noise of thunder flashed twice or thrice before their faces. So still was the crowd, and so reverberant the air, that they could hear the man's footsteps on the stony hillside. When he reached the

topmost point of the path and was about to descend the valley, he was seen to stop, and presently to turn his face, gazing backwards for a moment. Against the dim sky his figure could be seen from head to foot. While he stood the people held their breath. When he was gone and the mountain had hidden him, the crowd breathed audibly."

Careful readers of Mr. Hall Caine's books will have noticed that he is one of those pure romanticists who are not afraid to subordinate truths of actual fact to those other truths of imaginative effect which are the special concern of the artist. The word "ghyll," for example, in the Cumberland story, is often used in a manner which seems to indicate that, at the time of writing, the author supposed it to be the name for the mountain stream rather than for the ravine through which it forces its way; but, in spite of this deviation from verbal accuracy, the imaginative effect is always true. In the passage just quoted we have the word "reverberant," which can be accurately used only of a sound, applied to the medium by which the sound is conducted; and yet it would be difficult to find another word which would be a better aid to realisation, just as the physical impossibility of Dan's footfalls being heard across the distance which separates him from the crowd is boldly and successfully hazarded to accentuate the impassioned stillness by one stroke of daring hyperbole. Still, it may be admitted, in passing, that the impulse to temerity in the use of these expedients has always been Mr. Hall Caine's besetting temptation, and it

cannot be said that it is a temptation which has always been resisted.

But this by the way. The hand of the literary critic is like the hand of the dyer, subdued to what it works in, and it will ever be at its old tricks. Whatsoever the purist may say of Mr. Hall Caine's occasional strain of emphasis, there is one thing he can never say, that the author fails to make us free of the landscape in which we find ourselves. Whatever may be the superfluity or the lack of his treatment, it has unfailing gusto; and there are some of us for whom gusto-vivid and passionate realisation-covers a greater multitude of sins than have ever been laid to Mr. Hall Caine's charge. There are many complete novels of no mean repute that I would gladly exchange for that single chapter in The Deemster, "The First Night with the Herrings," or a similar passage in that pleasant volume, The Little Manx Nation, so full are they of the sayour of the sea and of the healthfulness of a human life lived in close contact and converse with the free, wild life of nature. The strain of poignant human emotion in Mr. Hall Caine's stories is often so tense that we demand air and breathing space; and these are never far distant, for in the three typical novels of which I have been speaking we are always within hail of the mountain and the moorland, and in the Manx stories our lungs are filled with the exhilaration of the breezes from the sweet, salt. sun-lighted, storm-swept wave.





THE BLIND SINGER.

By Albert Fleming.

M ANY years ago, when I was a struggling young artist, I passed a very happy summer making careful drawings of the English cathedrals. One July I found myself in a south country town, which I will call Crowborough. The old city is interesting in itself; in some parts the streets are so narrow, and the old houses so many-storied, that they seem almost to touch each other and shut out the blue sky above. Crowborough is proud of its old market-place and its old bridge, but the crowning glory of the town is its cathedral. After many artistic wanderings through all the English cathedrals, and not a few of the foreign ones, I always come back to Crowborough and vow that her old minster is the pearl and the flower of them all. The great busy work-a-day world respects its sanctity, and passing it by, has left it standing there, wrapped in divine and venerable peace. The cloisters shut it in on one side, and on the other three sides stand the old houses of the Close. Surely, in all England, no grass is so green, or so trimly kept as the velvet lawns that encircle the glorious old building; surely no rooks are so glossy or so ruri-decanal in aspect as those that swing in the cathedral elms and sail about its airy towers.

My little story begins on one hot day in August, when I was busily sketching in the nave of the cathedral, the profound stillness of noonday brooded over the vast building, the vergers had gone to dinner, there was a silence in the place that could almost be felt, I thought of that line from Browning:

"St. Praxed's ever was the church for peace."

It was so hot outside that the very rooks ceased cawing. I thought I had all Crowborough Cathedral to myself, when suddenly the deep silence was broken by a soft chord or two falling from the organ-loft. I dropped my brush to listen—the music went on, and I at once recognised the famous

canticle to the Virgin that the Countess Potacka sang to the dying Chopin. Then, in a few moments, a young, fresh voice rang through the building; it was as pure and sweet as any bird's, evidently the voice of a young girl, it had not (no girl's voice ever has) the unearthly quality of a boy's voice, but it came upon me like a spell, brought the tears to my eyes, and a thrill to every nerve. It was evidently a rehearsal or lesson, for the organist stopped again and again, and the young voice repeated the passage with unfailing patience. I was profoundly interested; and when the lesson came to an end I made my way to the staircase leading to the organ-loft and waited to see the young songstress. Presently the organist appeared, leading by the hand a poorlyclad child of about fourteen. He himself was a placid old gentleman of very kindly aspect.

"I waited to thank you for the great pleasure you have unknowingly given me; your little pupil has a lovely voice." As I spoke the organist gave me a quick glance and touched his eyes, nodding towards his companion.

"Nellie has a good voice, and works hard too," he replied.

The child turned her face to me, it was a pale little face, and the sorrowful eyes were full of the pathetic peace that one often sees in the eyes of the blind.

"I will sing to you, sir, whenever you like," she said.

I am an impulsive man, and I stooped down and kissed the sad little face.

"I have a little girl of my own just your age, my dear; you must let us be good friends. I come every day to sketch in the cathedral, and I hope I may often hear you sing."

After that Nellie and I grew to be quite close friends. By-and-bye it became her custom to go to the cathedral with me and sit by my side as I painted.

She would talk to me quietly by the hour together, telling me all about herself and her old father. It was always a great puzzle to her to understand about painting. She could not imagine what colour was, though form was easy enough to her. She was never unhappy about her blindness. Once I said something to her about the life beyond, when all eyes should see, but Nell made answer very softly:

"I am content here, for although God has denied me sight, he has given me a voice instead."

The only thing that troubled her was not being able to see flowers; she could enjoy the sweet scent, and I have seen her deft little fingers feel a bunch of roses all over, leaf, flower and stem, and then drop them in her lap with a sad little sigh and say, pathetically:

"How beautiful they must be!"

Her father was a cobbler, and he and she were quite alone in the world.

"He is a very good father," she said, "in a general way, and would be quite good except for Saturday nights and the Blue Posts."

Nell's great delight was to make me tell her all about the famous London singers, and the great London concerts: she would ask a hundred questions about the services in St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey, and then in return would tell me all about herself and her own hopes, and how Mr. Benson, the organist, had once heard her sing quite by chance, and had then offered to give her lessons for nothing. Nell had music in her very soul; it was life and joy to her. Of course, her blindness was a tremendous drawback, but she had an incomparable ear and an unfailing memory, and, above all, a tireless patience and power of study. Every day at two o'clock Nell would take my hand and lead me up to the organ-loft; she knew every inch of the way, and it was her delight to take care of me, and warn me when we came to the broken stair. A strange place was that organ-loft; all around and far away overhead, stretched the great forest of pipes; piles and piles of dusty music lay on every side. I had my own special corner where I could sit all by myself and listen to Nell's singing. When Nell sang she was transformed; she generally stood with her hands clasped, a rapt look in her sightless eyes, and a happy glow upon her face; then the poor, shabby child became a young St. Cecilia. I shall never forget her once singing a sacred song of Gounod's; her triumphant

fervour and enthusiasm were so wonderful that I was quite carried out of myself; as the last chord dropped to silence even the placid Mr. Benson turned approvingly to Nell and said:

"Well done, my child, well done." I had no voice to say anything; I could only press her little hand for a moment.

Once or twice I went to tea at Tom Christie's. The little house was wofully poor, but somehow Nell managed to keep it clean and neat. Her father was a strange old man, full of a simple pride in Nell's singing. Years ago he had sung in a village choir, and it was quite clear to him that Nell had inherited her voice from him. He always used to say:

"How have we got on to-day, Nell?" He claimed distinct proprietorship in the voice.

So weeks went on, and the summer ran by, and the time came when I had to go back to London. We had made all kinds of plans for the future. If Nell ever came to London, she was to live with me. My wife was dead, but my sister kept my house, and my daughter Annie was of an age to be companionable to Nell. We often wrote to her, and sometimes a letter came from Crowborough dictated by Nell and written by her father in large, schoolboy hand. After three years Mr. Benson wrote telling me he had done all he could for Nell's training, and now she must go to London for higher musical education. He said her voice had developed in a wonderful way, and but for her blindness he believed she might take a very high position as a concert singer. Mr. Benson never indulged in much enthusiasm, and I knew that this from him meant a great deal. Then he told me the Prince was going to open a hospital at Crowborough, and there was to be a festival in the cathedral, and Nell was to sing a solo, and he urged me to go down and hear her; but he begged me not to see her till it was all over, as the girl's nerves were already overstrung. Of course, I very gladly went, and my daughter Annie went too.

"I long to see her, father, and to hear her sing, and we'll bring her back to London with us." she said.

The day came. Never had such a day been known in quiet old Crowborough: flags adorned its quaint streets; there was a triumphal arch in the High Street; there were Venetian masts and brass bands; and some very enterprising people

even talked of the electric light and general illuminations. Luckily they had left the dear old cathedral alone: I think it looked more beautiful than ever standing grey and solemn amidst all the frippery.

I secured two seats well to the front, where I could not only hear the soloists but see them.

What a pleasant excitement there was in the little town. The old inns were crowded with guests; innumerable carriages dashed along the streets; all the county magnates for miles round flocked in dressed in their smartest clothes. It was pleasant to escape from the noise and bustle of the streets into the peace of the cathedral. How familiar it seemed to me to find myself once more in the grand old building! I looked up at the organ-loft where I had so often sat amidst the dust and heard Nell sing. There would be no dust there that day-all was swept and garnished for the festival. The oratorio was the familiar "Messiah." Great singers had journeyed from London, but Mr. Benson had bargained that the famous air, "I Know that my Redeemer Liveth," should be allotted to his little pupil, Nell, Crowborough's old-fashioned notions had been rather scandalised by the idea of what they called "secular instruments," such as fiddles and flutes, being introduced into the cathedral, but the more prominent members of the orchestra were put in surplices, and that satisfied Crowborough. The eminent London soprano made a tremendous fuss about surrendering her grand air to an unknown singer, but Mr. Benson was firm and carried his point. Looking down my programme, I should hardly have recognised my little friend Nell under her unfamiliar title of "Miss Eleanor Christie."

The cathedral was thronged from end to end. Not far from where we sat I discovered Nell's father, securely placed in a good corner; he was so clean, tidy, and well dressed, that I scarcely knew him. All went admirably—demonstrative enthusiasm was checked by a feeling of awe and devotion. The united choirs sang with great fire and precision, and the famous London singers did wonders.

Then at last came Nell's air—I trembled for her, my heart was in my mouth—a slight young figure stepped forward; she was dressed all in white, a neat little bonnet framing the sweet oval face. She looked like some young priestess. Of course she held no music in her hands: they were clasped before her in the old familiar ways that I

so well remembered. Everybody knew that she was blind, and I almost fancied a wave of kindly sympathy swept over the vast audience.

As her first notes rang through the building there was a strange movement of surprise amongst the people. The great London singers had displayed all the resources of their art; skill, training, and study were all brought to bear, but here was something that they could not touch: the pure sweet voice was like the clarion notes of a real resurrection song: the intense fervour, the conviction, the profound pathos, were not the result of long years of study: they came straight from Nell's heart, and they went straight to ours. I bent my head to hide the happy tears that filled my eyes. Annie's hand stole into mine. When the last note died away, a kind of sob or gasp seemed to come from the people. I don't remember much else; I suppose the oratorio ran its usual course, but my interest in it ceased with Nell's singing. We went out in a dream, almost afraid to speak lest we should break the spell. Annie said, as we stood in the sunlight in the Close:

"Oh, father, it was like the voice of an angel."

That evening we found our way to the familiar little house in Potter's Row. Nell knew my step in a moment, and both her eager hands were clasped in mine.

"Were you satisfied?" she asked.

"Oh, Nell, who wouldn't be; I never heard such singing before."

Nell was conscious of someone else being there, and asked who it was.

"I am Annie, and you and I, Nell, are going to be sisters." Then they kissed each other, and Nell lightly passed her hand over Annie's face—the quick movement that was her way of "seeing" people.

That solo was the turning point in Nell's career. Crowborough was proud of her; the local press gave a glowing description of her singing, and there was a general feeling that she must go to London. So in a few months' time she came, and of course, made her home with us. She grew to be very dear to us all; her gentleness, her patience, and sweet helplessness won all our hearts. The blindness was a terrible stumbling-block to her progress in her art, but her invincible patience and quick instinct went far in counteracting it, and then the voice itself was so wonderful that the famous London master said:

"Blind or seeing, her voice must be cultivated in every possible way."

Annie now became Nell's right hand, or rather she became her eyes, taking her to and from the Academy, playing her accompaniments for her, and always helping in the practising.

It must have been about six months after Nell first came to us, that I gave a dinner party, and amongst the guests was a famous oculist, one Dr. Dawson. In the course of the evening Nell sang, and as usual, created quite an excitement. I noticed that the doctor watched Nell eagerly, gazing right into her eyes whenever she lifted them to the light. As he was leaving he drew me into my studio.

"Your young friend's sight might possibly be restored." I started with surprise. Nell had never known what it was to see, and we had never seriously thought of her blindness as curable.

"Bring her to me to-morrow, and let me carefully examine her."

"No," I said; "not unless there is a really good chance of its being successful."

"There is, indeed, a very excellent chance," he answered. "Bring her to me," he repeated, significantly.

I broke it very gently to Nell; the colour left her face, and then she flushed rosy red again, as she clasped her hands, and said:

"Oh, God, to see!"

Then I told her how she would have to suffer much, to bear long imprisonment, to be very idle for weeks, perhaps months; but she faced all bravely, and said at last in her quiet, steadfast way:

"I will endure all for the sake of my art."

The examination was carefully made, and it confirmed the doctor's hope: there was every chance of Nell getting her sight, but the operation was a profoundly difficult one, and would prove a great shock to Nell's frail health. But the stake was so high and precious that we agreed to run all risk, and Nell underwent the operation. For two months afterwards she had to lie with bandaged eyes in a dark room; coupled with the usual prostration, there was some strange shock to the nervous system. Not a sound was allowed to break the awful stillness of her sick-room, and music was not even to be named to her.

At the end of two months Nell was stronger, and the doctor decided to remove the bandages. I stood beside her arm chair and held her trembling little hand; it was all so new to her—so strange and bewildering. Dr. Dawson stooped and looked carefully into each eye; then he said triumphantly:

"She sees!"

I knelt by her side.

"Nell, darling, look at me."

She turned her eyes with a painful effort and looked at me; then she passed her hand lightly over my face with the old familiar gesture, as if she could not trust the new sense.

"You are very like what I thought you would be."

For many days sight was a trouble to Nell; she had no idea of measuring distances by her eyes; she still used her touch and her hearing in many of the old ways.

"When may I try my voice again?" was her one cry now, and at last, after many days, the doctor gave his permission. Annie sat down to play her accompaniment, and though Nell (and all of us) knew every word and note of the song, she insisted on holding the music in her hand and pretending to sing from it, though, of course, she could read neither words nor notes. How her face kindled, as drawing a deep breath, she lifted her glorious voice to sing—Oh! never shall I forget the agony that came into her seeing eyes as she dropped the music and placed both hands to her throat and cried:

"Oh God, my voice has gone!"

"Oh Nell, Nell, try again; it is only want of practice."

Once more she tried, and again and again, but the notes were harsh, broken, and false; literally not a trace remained of the wonderful voice of the old days. Truly God had given her back one faculty and then taken away the other.

Everything was tried; the best throat specialists were consulted; but Nell never sang again.

When she found it was hopeless her heart and life seemed to fail her; her strength had never been great, now day by day it grew less.

"I don't care to live now," she said to me, as I sat beside her, holding her poor thin hand in mine.

She lingered through the winter, always patient and uncomplaining, and then when the snowdrops were whitening the young earth, Nell left us.

Perhaps God has now given her back her voice, and added her to the Immortal singers—

"Who quire eternally around His throne."

THE STARRY SKY.

By J. ELLARD GORE, F.R.A.S.

N a clear and moonless night, when the sky is spangled over with shining points of light, some bright, others fainter, and many more barely perceptible to the unaided vision, we are apt to imagine that the stars are innumerable, and that any attempt to count them would be a hopeless task. This is, however, quite a mistake, and merely a popular fallacy. The stars can be easily counted; and they have been counted and catalogued. Every star visible to the naked eye, and thousands of others, fainter, have been mapped and catalogued, and their exact positions in the sky are as well known to astronomers as that of every town and village in Great Britain.

The number which can be seen with ordinary eyesight is, in fact, very limited, and does not exceed the number of inhabitants in a small town! This may seem surprising to some people, but it is an undoubted fact which admits of no dispute. Some years ago a German astronomer, Heis, who was gifted with excellent eyesight, carefully mapped out all the stars visible to his eye without optical aid, and found the total number visible in the middle of Europe to be only 3,903. Behrmann, another German astronomer-who also possessed good sight-did the same thing for the southern hemisphere, and the total number of stars seen by both observers in both hemispheres of the star sphere is 7,249. Of course, at any given time and place only one-half the star sphere is visible, the other half being below the horizon. We have, therefore, about 3,600 stars visible at one time from any point on the earth's surface. As, however, everyone has not the sharp vision of the astronomers above referred to, we may safely assume that not more than 3,000 are, on the average, visible at a time to ordinary eyesight. On the other hand, persons gifted with exceptionally keen vision may see even more than Heis and Behrmann did, but even to such eyes probably 5,000 would include the total which are distinctly visible on a clear night without a moon.

We may easily satisfy ourselves as to the truth of this statement—should any lingering doubt remain—by taking a small portion of the sky and counting the number of stars which can be steadily seen. Everybody knows the Great Bear, sometimes

called the "Plough," or "Charles' Wain." Four of the seven well-known stars in this remarkable group form a four-sided figure. Well, let the reader look carefully at this figure and see how many small stars can be detected within the space formed by imaginary lines joining the bright stars. Surprise will, I think, be felt at the small number visible. Heis, with his keen vision, shows only eight on his map, and of these four are very faint and mar the limit of even good eyesight. Very few eyes will, I think, see more than eight, and probably most people will fail to see so many. Possibly, however, young persons may see a few more. The experiment is an interesting one, and worth trying. As the whole hemisphere is, roughly, about five hundred times larger than the quadrilateral figure in the Plough, Heis' number would give a total of 4,000 stars visible at one time. Of course, some portions of the sky are much richer in stars than the Great Bear, but again others are much poorer, so that this may perhaps be taken as an average spot. From this single example it will, I think, be seen that the idea of countless multitudes of stars is a mistake. The effect of a vast number is probably partly due to our catching glimpses by "averted vision" of still fainter stars, which, however, cannot be seen steadily when the eye is turned directly towards them.

In speaking of stars visible to the naked eye, I do not, of course, include the Milky Way, that arch of cloudy light which spans the heavens; for although this wonderful zone is composed of faint stars, these stars are individually invisible without a telescope.

Notwithstanding the limited number of the visible or lucid stars, as they are called, the aspect of the starry sky still presents a spectacle of marvellous beauty and interest, and may be studied with pleasure and advantage, even without any optical assistance. There are many interesting objects in the heavens which may be seen without a telescope of any kind. Look at the middle star of the three forming the "tail" of the Great Bear or handle of the Plough. This star was called Mizar by the old Arabian astronomers. Close to it, good insight will see a small star known as Alcor, and sometimes called, "Jack on the Middle

Horse." This little star was called by the Arabians Alsuha, which means the "neglected small star." The name Alcor signifies "the test," and is supposed to indicate that the ancient astronomers considered it as a test for keen vision; but the Arabians had a proverb, "I show him Alsuha, and he shows me the Moon," which seems to imply that it could be easily seen by these old astronomers. The faintest star of the seven-the one at the root of the tail-was called Megrez by the Arabians. This star is supposed to have diminished in brightness, as it was rated of the third magnitude by Ptolemy, and of the second by Tycho Brahé, while at present it is not very much above the fourth magnitude. It may possibly be variable in its light, like many other stars in the heavens. The seven stars in the "Plough" are known to astronomers by the Greek letters, Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta (the faint one), Epsilon, Zeta, and Eta, beginning with the northern of the two in the square farthest from the "tail" and following the order of the stars. The stars Alpha and Beta are called "the pointers," because a line drawn from Beta through Alpha points nearly to a bright star called the Pole Star, which lies near the pole of the celestial sphere, or the point round which the whole star sphere seems to revolve. owing to the rotation of the earth on its axis in twenty-four hours. The distance from Alpha to the Pole Star is about five times the distance between Alpha and Beta.

If we draw an imaginary line from the star Epsilon through the Pole Star, and produce it to about the same distance on the opposite side of the Pole, it will pass through a well-known group called Cassiopeia's Chair. This consists of five fairly bright stars, arranged in the form of an irregular W. A sixth star, much fainter than the others, forms with three of them a square-shaped figure. It was near this faint star—known to astronomers by the Greek letter Kappa—that the famous "new" or "temporary star" of Tycho Brahé, sometimes called the "Pilgrim Star," suddenly appeared in November, 1572. It was brighter than Venus, and visible in full daylight. It remained visible for over a year, and then entirely vanished.

If we continue the curve formed by the three stars in the tail of the Great Bear, it will pass near a very bright star of an orange colour. This is Arcturus, one of the brightest stars visible in Europe. If we can place reliance on the measures of its distance from the earth which have been made, this brilliant star is one of the largest bodies in the universe, thousands of times larger than our sun!—which, placed at the distance assigned to Arcturus, would shine as a faint star, quite invisible without a telescope!

Returning again to the Great Bear: if we draw a line from Gamma to Beta and produce it, it will pass near a bright star of a yellow colour. This is Capella. The Arabian astronomers called it the "Guardian of the Pleiades." It is the brightest star of the constellation Auriga, or "The Charioteer," referred to by Tennyson in "The Princess."

"And the shining daffodil dies, and the Charioteer And starry Gemini hang like glorious crowns Over Orion's grave low down in the west,"

Referring to the disappearance of the constellation Orion below the western horizon in the evening sky of April.

"Starry Gemini" is marked by two bright stars, Castor and Pollux, which may be found by drawing a line from Delta to Beta of the Great Bear, and producing it. Another line drawn from Delta to Gamma and produced towards the south, will pass near a bright star called Regulus, the brightest star in the well-known "Sickle" in Leo, or the Lion-Again, a line drawn from Regulus to Gamma inthe Great Bear and produced will pass near another bright star, Vega in the Lyre. This is one of the brightest stars in the Northern hemisphere. The name Vega seems to be a corruption of the Arabic name vaki. Close to Vega are two small stars, which form with it a little triangle. The northern of these two is a double star, which is said to have been seen double with the naked eye by several astronomers, but probably most people will fail to see it as anything but a single star, as the component stars are very close. A good opera glass will, however, show it distinctly.

To the east of Vega lies the constellation of Cygnus, or the Swan, one of the finest constellations in the sky. It may be distinguished by the long cross formed by its principal stars, known to astronomers as Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta and Epsilon; Alpha, also called Deneb, being the most northern and the brightest, and Beta, or Albireo, the most southern and faintest of the five. The name Deneb is derived from the Arabic word dzanab, or the "tail" of the Swan, referring to its

position in the ancient figure which represented a hen or swan flying towards the south. The Milky Way in Cygnus is very brilliant, especially between Gamma and Beta, and the whole constellation contains splendid fields of stars, which may be well seen with a small telescope.

To the south-east of Cassioneia's Chair we find the well-known festoon of stars which marks the constellation Perseus. The brightest star is sometimes called Mirfak, a name derived from the Arabic marfik, the elbow, referring either to the ancient figure of Perseus, or perhaps to its position in the curve of stars. South of Perseus, and the nearest bright star to Mirfak in that direction, is Algol, the famous variable star. Farther south we come to the constellation of Taurus, or the Bull, one of the "signs of the Zodiac," with the wellknown groups of the Pleiades and Hyades. The Pleiades form a remarkable cluster, and when once recognised can never be mistaken. To ordinary eyesight six stars are visible, but those having keener vision can see more. A little south of the Pleiades is a V-shaped figure, the Hyades, with a pright star of a reddish colour. This is Aldebaran, a name derived from an Arabic word which means the attendant or follower, because it appears to follow the Pleiades in the diurnal motion. It was also known to the Arabian astronomers by other names, such as Alfanik, "the great camel," the other small stars forming the Hyades representing the "young camels."

South of Taurus and Gemini comes the magnificent constellation of Orion, perhaps the most splendid collection of stars in the sky. This brilliant asterism contains many fine objects. Looking at it when it is visible in the winter sky, we notice a large four-sided figure formed by four conspicuous stars. The upper one to the left is called Betelgeuse, and is decidedly reddish in colour-very much resembling Aldebaran in tint and brightness, but its light is slightly variable. Its name is derived from an Arabic word which signifies the shoulder, because it is situated on the right shoulder of the giant Orion on the old celestial globes. The upper star to the right is called Bellatrix, or the "female warrior," The real meaning of some of these old names is sometimes difficult to understand, Of the lower stars, that on the right is a beautiful white star of the first magnitude, known as Rigel. It is situated on the right foot of the ancient figure of Orion, and its name is derived from the Arabic ridjl-al-djauza, "the leg of the giant." The lower star on the left is known to astronomers by the Greek letter Kappa.

In the middle of the four-sided figure above referred to are three stars of the second magnitude nearly in a straight line, forming "Orion's belt." The upper one of the three is slightly fainter than the others, and has been suspected of being variable in its light, but this is doubtful. South of these three conspicuous stars are three fainter stars, forming a nearly vertical line. This is the "sword of Orion." The middle star of the three marks the position of the "great nebula in Orion," one of the most wonderful objects in the heavens. To some eyes a nebulous glow is visible round this star, and even in a small telescope the nebulæ is an interesting object. On a very clear night the southern star of the three may be seen double with the naked eve.

The three bright stars in Orion's belt nearly point (to the south-east) to Sirius, the brightest star in the heavens. This is a magnificent white star, and is so much brighter than any other star that its identity cannot be mistaken.

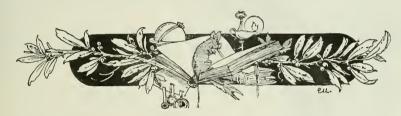
There are many other objects visible in the sky without any optical assistance. If we draw a line from the star Gamma in the Plough to the Pole Star and produce it beyond the Pole, it will pass through a four-sided figure somewhat similar to the Plough but of larger size, and the stars rather fainter. This is known as the "Square of Pegasus." Here, again, we may try how many stars we can see within this square. Heis shows 37 on his map. but some of these are very faint. This gives about 4,500 for the whole hemisphere. The upper stars in this square are known as Beta in Pegasus or Scheat, and Alpha in Andromeda, or Alpheret. To the east of Alpheret is a star of the third magnitude, Delta, and to the east of Delta is a star of the second, called Beta in Andromeda, or Mirach. A little north of Mirach are two small stars called Mu and Nu nearly in a line with Mirach, and to the north of Nu is the famous "Nebula in Andromeda." This nebula is just visible to the naked eye as a hazy spot of light, and it may be well seen in an opera glass. Even in a small telescope it is a splendid object.

When the positions of the principal stars are known, it will be easy to find any other object

required by the aid of star maps. Should a bright star be observed in a position where a fixed star of this brilliancy is known not to exist, this will be one of the planets. If seen rising in the east at or a little after sunset, it will be either Mars, Jupiter, or Saturn. If brighter than an ordinary first-magnitude star, like Aldebaran, it will be either Jupiter or Mars. If of a distinctly reddish colour, it is Mars; if not, it is Jupiter. If only as bright as a star of the first magnitude, it is Saturn. If very bright and only seen in the west after sunset, or in the east before sunrise, it is Venus. Jupiter and Mars are, of course, sometimes morning and evening stars also, but they are never so bright as Venus at its brightest, and cannot well be mistaken for it.

Mercury, owing to its proximity to the sun, is rather difficult to see, but if looked for when favourably situated, it may be detected in the morning or evening sky. In India, where the twilight is shorter than here, I found it easily visible and about equal in brightness to Aldebaran. I have also seen it frequently in the west of Ireland. The positions of the different planets may always be found at any time from "Whitaker's Almanack."

I hope I have succeeded in showing that it is easy to acquire, with little trouble, a knowledge of the principal stars and constellations. After some practice the young observer will become quite familiar with the heavens, and will learn to take more interest in the wonders and beauties of the starry sky.



REMEMBER!

From the French of Alfred de Musset.

Remember, when the timorous Dawn Unto the sun unbars the morning sky; Remember, when the pensive Night,

Dreaming beneath her silver veil, goes by.
When pleasures' calls to soft unrest incite thee,
When to sweet dreams the shades of eve invite thee,

Hear, from the woods profound,

A low voice sound—

Remember!

Remember, when our destinies Shall have for ever wrenched our lives apart; When exile, grief, and years

Have withered with despair this hopeless heart.

Dream of my sad love, and its last farewell, Nor time, nor absence can my passion quell.

Long as my heart shall beat, It shall to thine repeat— Remember!

Remember, when beneath the chilly earth
This broken heart for evermore shall sleep;
Remember, when the solitary flower
Above my lonely grave shall gently creep.
Farewell... But still for thee my deathless soul shall yearn,
And unto thine, like a twin soul, return.
Hear, on the low night gale,

Its sad voice wail—

Remember!

BEATRICE CREGAN.













STORIES OF SOME FAMOUS PICTURES.

L-THREE ITALIAN MASTERPIECES.

By KINETON PARKES.

In these days when the tendency of the art of painting is to record a passing impression rather than to build up an elaborate picture, it is a little difficult to realise the conditions under which the old and great masters worked. To return in the imagination to the full tide of Italian painting seems like returning to the days of the Titans. The great painters of those days not only produced works which were great as works of art, but works which were veritably great undertakings. The Egyptians produced the Pyramids; in our time we erect great works of engineering—the Tower Bridge, the Eiffel Tower: the Italians at the time of their greatness built noble churches which were decorated by the finest painters the world has seen.

There was hardly a church in Italy that had not its painted altar-piece: very few which had not also their frescoed walls. Many a young painter in those days put his soul into his first young efforts in the frescoes he painted in some out-of-the-way sanctuary which has now become the shrine to which lovers of art wend their way, ready to admire and appland.

There is generally some romantic story connected with the lives of these painters, many of them monks, who found vent for their religious enthusiasm, not in works of religion as such, but in works of art. It was not, however, always religious enthusiasm which produced the religious picture There are cases, like that of Fra Bartolommeo, where this was so; but in the majority of instances the great painters who produced the masterpieces of religious art were but employed by the wealthy popes and cardinals of the Church, very often more for their own aggrandisement than for the glory of God. It was not religious enthusiasm, but the enthusiasm for their art which carried the great painters through their noble, but also arduous tasks.

The record of the life of Michelangelo Buonarotti, is a record of struggles and disappointments, in which much of his energy and his power must inevitably have been dissipated. He was at the mercy of the caprice of king, noble, pope, or

cardinal at various times, and, moreover, he was also at the mercy of his own personality-no light burden. But his great spirit sufficed to carry him triumphantly through the ninety years of his eventful and stirring life. Born near Arezzo, in 1475, he passed to Florence. He was a pupil of Ghirlandajo and became a master, not only of painting but of sculpture and architecture. That he was a poet may easily be seen by readers who have not Italian in the beautiful translations of his sonnets made by the late John Addington Symonds, who just a few months before his death published the most recent biography of the great and many-sided genius. From Florence, where he had been the protégé of Lorenzo de Medici, he passed to Venice, Bologna, and Rome, where in 1500 he produced the Pietà in St. Peter's. His great statue of David was produced in Florence, but when it was finished most of his great works were accomplished in Rome. In four years he produced the great and noble work, the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, while still a young man of less than forty years of age. Taken as a whole this is the greatest work in painting which the world has ever seen. Other artists have produced famous single pictures or single frescoes, and Michelangelo himself produced nobler works than any one of the series which compose the Sistine ceiling, but never has there been produced so grand a conception as this scheme of decoration taken in its entirety.

It paved the way for the incomparable work. "The Last Judgment," also in the Sistine Chapel, but upon the wall. Most of Michelangelo's work was done for the pope: it was Julius II. who commissioned a great monument to be a memorial of his own life, but the only result of which was the fine statue of Moses; and it was Julius, too, who commissioned the painting of the Sistine Chapel ceiling, for which the work on the memorial was suspended. Popes Leo X., Clement VII., and Paul III. gave him commissions, and it was the latter who was responsible for "The Last Judgment," although it had really been commissioned by Clement.

The position of this, the world's greatest single



THE LAST JUDGMENT.
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picture, is on the end wall of the Sistine Chapel, over the altar. It took seven years in the painting, and was brought to a conclusion in 1541. It is the Inferno of Michelangelo's art: his Paradiso and his Purgatorio may be found elsewhere, but in no other work of his can be found the utter terror and fearful inevitableness of the terrible side of Christianity. It is an awful vision, and devoid of the gentler influences which are the more marked aspects of Christianity at the present time, and to a certain extent at that time too. But it was Michelangelo's nature to be thus: not for him the sublimity of gentleness which we may find in the Madonnas of Raphael: for him the sublimity of the grandeur of horror and of pain. In his works we may not find that repose which Lessing insists is the noblest attribute of a work of art to any great extent. In some of his sculpture we may find it, and grandly exemplified, but we may certainly not find repose of any kind in "The Last Judgment." Its note is terror from beginning to end.

In superb contrast to the beauty of violence of Michelangelo is the beauty of repose of Raphael. This contrast, so apparent in the work of the two men, is equally so in their lives: not that Raphael did not suffer reverses and meet with disappointments and rebuffs, but he overcame with gentleness what Michelangelo overcame by more robust forces.

Raphael Sanzio was born at Urbino on Good Friday, in 1483, and died on Good Friday, in 1520. His father was a painter of no mean genius, and he was responsible for the early training of his greater son. Early in his life the intense earnestness and steadfastness of Fra Bartolommeo-the great artist-friar-affected Raphael, and resulted in a change of manner from that discernible in the works which he painted while under the influence of his second master, the great Perugino. He has also a third and later manner, in which all his greatest works are created; the manner which he acquired on being commanded to appear at Rome by Pope Julius II.; Julius II., King Francis I., and Pope Leo X. were Raphael's chief masters. For them most of his great works were produced. Julius II. employed him in beautifying the Vatican. At the period when he commenced his work here, Michelangelo was engaged on the decoration of the Sistine Chapel, and the younger Raphael was spurred to emulation by the grandeur of Michelangelo's conception and his prodigious capacity for work.

The "Stanze" of the Vatican was the scene of Raphael's labours. It consisted of three apartments and a large saloon, the walls and ceilings of which were covered by the painter in fresco. While concluding his labours in the Stanze, Raphael, by order of Leo X., was preparing designs for tapestries for the Sistine Chapel, and the decoration also of the Loggie of the Vatican. The pictures here were called "Raphael's Bible," so numerous were they, and all of them were scenes taken from Bible history.

There were eleven designs or cartoons for the tapestries, seven of which are now in the South Kensington Museum, whither they were removed from Hampton Court Palace. The other four have disappeared. The tapestries themselves, which were made at Arras, suffered many vicissitudes after their first hanging in the Sistine Chapel. Most of the designs represent scenes in the lives of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, and the cartoons were produced by Raphael and his pupils in distemper colour. They have been engraved, and are noble examples of the religious art of the times. For King Francis Raphael produced many fine works, and his works on canvas found their way all over Europe and were greatly prized. His last great conception, "The Transfiguration," was left unfinished by the great master at his death. It was completed by Giulio Romano and the pupils of Raphael, and is now in the Vatican.

It is in the careful study of the long series of Raphael's Madonnas that his greatness fully appears. It matters little what subjects an artist paints: his art is there for us to study and admire in detail, and although it is natural to tire of the variations in treatment of the one subject, the Virgin and Child, yet we have in this very fact such an opportunity of tracing the growth of Raphael's art as is offered us by no other artist's work. And this growth was a true development; not mere variation, but a gradual and persistent effort on the part of the artist until at last he reached the ideal type of his subject.

Raphael painted forty-eight pictures of the Madonna and Child; all of them are lovely, but the "Madonna di San Sisto" is the loveliest and tenderest of them all. Who does not know this picture from the reproductions which may be seen



RAPHAEL'S MADONNA, (Reproduced by permission of Messrs, Eyre & Spottiswoode.)

everywhere? It is Raphael's masterpiece, and to say so is to say that it is the masterpiece of Italian painting and the greatest religious picture the world possesses. Our ideas concerning religious art have largely changed since the time this beautiful work was produced, but as all the essentials of the great art of painting are here presented to us, we may regard these only and realise how triumphant a trophy this is of man's genius.

The "Madonna di San Sisto" was painted about 1515 for the convent of San Sisto at Piacenza, and no studies for it are known to exist, and it is believed that it was the spontaneous effort of the mind of its creator, after the way had been payed for it by the long series of beautiful works I have just mentioned. It is the greatest inspiration that painting has known, and was probably produced with great rapidity by the artist once its conception had formed in his mind. For many years this noble work was practically hidden away at Piacenza, but in 1753 the Elector of Hanover, Augustus III., acquired it for about £0,000, and since that time it has occupied the chief place in Dresden's wonderful museum. It occupies a gallery to itself, and here every lover of art makes his pilgrimage and stands in awe before so great a work of genius. It is an absolutely ideal and ethereal picture. There is nothing of the earth about it in any way whatever. The Virgin's feet tread upon clouds and she holds the Child against a glorious background of cherubim, whose beautiful faces the painter has rendered with marvellous skill. Heavy curtains are drawn back on either side, revealing on the left Pope Saint Sixtus, his tiara at his side, and on the right Saint Barbara, both doing homage to the infant Christ. In the foreground are those two marvellous cherubs, which have been reproduced thousands of times, and are a never-failing source of pure delight, so beautiful are they.

In the annals of Italian art, two men with highly romantic lives stand out from among their fellows, Benvenuto Cellini and Leonardo da Vinci, though they have little in common, either in their lives or in their work—it was the romance of their lives which leads one to connect their names. It is with Leonardo da Vinci, however, we have now to deal. Born in 1452, near Florence, he was the forerunner both of Michelangelo and of Raphael, and he it is who connects the early Italian painting

with the great age. He it is who connects Cimabue and Giotto, and their line, with Michelangelo, Raphael, and Titian. Historically, he is of the first importance; in art he painted one of the world's masterpieces, in science he anticipated Galileo and Kepler, and in philosophy he forestalled Bacon by declaring that "experiment and observation must be the guide to just theory." He was a painter, sculptor, architect, engineer, author, scientist, and musician-a very giant. He connected the Middle Ages with the Renaissance, and his successors and we moderns know but little how much we owe to him and his influence. It is mainly as a painter, however, that we have now to consider him. His master was Verocchio, but his master and every other contemporary painter were soon out-distanced by Da Vinci.

In the year that Raphael was born, 1483, Da Vinci went to Milan and founded a school of art there, and in the service of the Duke Ludovico Sforza executed the great equestrian statue of the Duke Francesco, which did not survive the French invasion of Italy in 1499. Contemporary with this great work is "The Last Supper," of which we have to speak later. When on the fall of the Sforzas in 1500 da Vinci returned to Florence, he painted the celebrated "Gioconda" picture, which may be seen in the Louvre, and also his celebrated fresco: and here he and Michelangelo came in contact, the latter also painting in fresco at the same time, and in friendly rivalry, in the noble councilchamber there. On the completion of his work there his restless nature caused him to lead a somewhat unsettled life, and he wandered to Rome and Milan, painting pictures, writing books, constructing canals, and shining in the society of the great and famous, where his great gifts, his good looks and fine presence always commanded a warm welcome. King Francis conceived a great affection for him, and after the Italian campaign, Da Vinci, in 1516, accompanied the King to France. He did not return to his native country, but died at Cloux, in Amboise, three years afterwards. His was a careless nature, and everything which occupied his time possessed the same interest for him. His play was his work, and in society he was as seriously at work as in his studio, and the reverse seems to have held good.

It was to his experiments, and to his characteristic nonchalance, that the world owes the loss of



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his finest work, of which only the most tragmentary portions now remain to us. "The Last Supper" was painted on a wall, in the worst position in a building which was totally unfit for the purpose, and instead of painting in fresco, as he should have done, he painted in oils on a ground insufficiently prepared to receive such a medium. Moreover, worse than this, two centuries after, the monks, with their characteristic want of reverence for art at that date, cut a doorway right through the painting, and once more, in 1796, the French soldiers turned the apartment into a stable for cavalry horses. Yet, in spite of all this, every one knows the composition

of the great masterpiece from the engravings to be found of it in every civilised community, and no nobler rendering of that last, great, solemn occasion has ever been conceived.

In these three great works we have a legacy of thought which the world may well be thankful for. In Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper" we have the ideal picture of the solemn function; in Michelangelo's "Last Judgment" a conception of the last day, which for power has never been surpassed; and in Raphael's Mary and Christ a conception of beatitude the like of which art can never again produce.

WHEN MARCH WINDS BLOW.

IVE me veiled eyes, divincly blue,
Whose modest glances tell
A secret shy, which they and I
Alone can spell.

Give me a heart, whose treasures lie
Far out of vulgar ken;
My treasure-trove, mine own, unknown
To gods or men!

Give me a voice, a lyre-swept tone, Familiar as the song That is an oft-repeated bliss The whole day long!

Give me, O Love, thy lips to kiss,
When Faith and Hope burn low;
What lack I yet? A violet!
The March winds blow!

CHARLOTTE BAIN.



CHAPTER XVIII.

"The setting of a great hope is like the setting of the sun."

ENNETH ERROL was walking home very slowly. From the window Mary saw him coming, and wondered why he was not hurrying as he had been wont to do of late. When he entered the house, he did not even go up to his room as usual, but loitered about the parlour as if uncertain what to do.

It was the evening after the events of the last chapter, and ever since the visit of Ada Douglas he had seemed moody and restless; but now it was apparent that he was ill at ease. Under ordinary circumstances, Mary could not have observed this without inquiring the cause; but during the past few months that cold feeling of estrangement had been deepening and strengthening, until she found it impossible even to attempt its removal.

She watched him pace nervously to and fro, the indication of a mental struggle plainly visible on his knitted brow and compressed lips, and even more emphatically expressed in the quick, impatient gesture with which he thrust his fingers among the curls of his hair.

Presently he left the room and went upstairs. He closed and fastened the door of his bedroom, and, lighting a lamp, drew out of his pocket a letter which Stephen Douglas had put into his hands that morning, having evidently been waiting for some time to do so; after the delivery of which the boy had departed, with a strange expression of face, as though he partly surmised what the contents of the letter were, and wished to avoid seeing their effect on Mr. Errol.

The words were few and simple, and had been written either the night before or early that morning. They were these :-

"KENNETH,-Fare you well. I know the reason of the change in you that has weighed on my heart ever since I came home from France. I have seen my rival, and scarcely wonder you love her as you never loved me. I release you from your vows; they were made in haste, and too readily believed by one whose greatest fault was loving you too well. If you ever think of me, let it be as of one dead. who forgave you in the first moments of her grief, and prays that God will forgive you too.

" ADA."

Again and again he read those sentences, with ever-increasing distress. Sometimes he rose and walked like one distracted through the chamber, stopping occasionally to think, and wringing his hands viciously under stress of mental pain. "What am I to do?" was the question ever on his lips, to which no answer suggested itself.

At last a sudden resolution seemed to strike him. He restored the letter to his pocket, dashed some cold water on his heated face, and went downstairs.

The evening meal was but a mockery on his part, and he very soon quitted the table, without being asked where he was going. His destination on such occasions was now too well known to make inquiries anything but superfluous.

It was not to Lynnburgh, however, his steps were now directed; he took the road leading through the valley to Douglas Castle.

When he reached it, his speed insensibly slackened, and he was advancing slowly and deliberately up the avenue, when the sound of other footsteps behind him caused him to pause and look round.

"Oh, it's you, Mr. Errol?" said the familiar voice of Dr. Kinross. "Come to inquire for Miss Douglas, I suppose? Very unexpected illness, surely; do you know anything about it? I was sent for this afternoon, but being called to a distance just this morning, I didn't get the message till half-an-hour ago. I hope it's nothing serious. Young ladies in love, you know, are apt to be fanciful at times. Eh, Mr. Errol?"

It was some time ere Kenneth found voice to reply. At the announcement, made in the physician's matter-of-fact, blunt way, his heart gave a great leap, and an overwhelming sense of guilt kept him speechless.

"I am quite as much taken by surprise as yourself," he by-and-bye said. "It must, indeed, have been sudden. I hope——"

They had reached the entrance, and the door was opened, before Dr. Kinross could ring, by Jessy Douglas herself, who came running down the steps, crying:

"Oh, why have you been so long in coming, doctor?"

"Long, my dear? I came off the instant I got the message," returned the physician. "How is your sister? Not seriously unwell, is she?"

"Yes, I think she is. We fear it is fever," was the reply. "But come in."

Dr. Kinross followed her invitation; and then, for the first time she noticed the presence of Kenneth Errol, who had hitherto kept in the background, as if afraid to be seen.

"Good evening, Mr. Errol," she said, coldly, and with a distant bow.

"Jessy, come here," he implored, in a voice strangely unlike his own. "I want to speak to you."

"I can't stay; I must go back to Ada," she answered, drawing away from him as he approached her.

"I won't keep you," he rejoined; "only tell me how this happened?"

"You know very well how it happened, Kenneth Errol," she replied, with the dignity of honest displeasure, as she bent upon him a piercing look of reproach. "Have you forgotten our meeting yesterday afternoon?"

"She was well then," said he, evading the question. "Tell me when she took ill."

"You have forfeited all right to know anything of her," was Jessy's indignant response, as the sense of the cruel wrong he had inflicted on her beloved sister recurred more vividly at that moment. "She has never spoken a single word to me about it; but 1 know very well you have broken her heart, Kenneth Errol, and I hope you will be punished for it."

"Jessy, you are cruel," he cried, in accents sharp with the pain he felt. "Don't judge me till you know all. But tell me—it is surely a small favour—how did she take ill?"

His manner touched the girl's impulsive heart, and, relenting, she said:

"She was in the theatre last night, and I think it was there she took ill, for we all noticed that she looked strange; and when we came home she was seized with giddiness, and altogether looked as if she had got a blow, or something of that sort. Jenny says she is quite sure she never went to bed till shortly before she went to her room in the morning; at any rate, she had been writing, for she sent Stephen away before breakfast with a note for you. He was not to tell, but I made him; and I have a pretty good gness what the letter was. It Ada has the heart of a Douglas, she won't forgive perfidy. Now, I wish you a very good evening."

And, before he could frame a reply, she had entered the house, leaving him more troubled and tormented than he had been before. He turned away with a groan, and walked reluctantly back to the main road. There, however, he halted, determined to wait till Dr. Kinross came out from the house, when he could hear whether his apprehensions regarding Ada's sudden illness were well founded or not.

But more than an hour elapsed before he heard the welcome sound of the doctor's footsteps.

"How is she?" he asked. "I did not care to disturb them to-night by going to inquire myself. You don't think it anything serious?" he subjoined, in manifest concern.

"Well, it may not be; I hope it may not be, Mr. Errol," said the physician kindly, remembering that he was speaking to the affianced husband of his patient; "but there are symptoms of fever, which may develop into—into something serious.

One never knows how fever will turn out for the first day or two. This must have been brewing for some time, however. I am returning after I pay one or two visits hereabouts, and shall probably remain overnight to watch the progress of the malady."

Kenneth was silent for a good while; and his companion, supposing very naturally that pure anxiety about one in whom he must be so much interested was the cause, proceeded to cheer him as best he could.

"There's no cause to be alarmed in the meantime," he said. "She may rally quite as suddenly as she has succumbed. At any rate, I'll call to-morrow morning and give you the latest accounts. And now, I am going to a farm here, so good-night, Mr. Errol, and keep a brave heart."

"I thank you, sir," was all Kenneth could reply, as he pursued his lonely way homeward, haunted by accusing demons, who seemed to shriek their terrible threats into his ear, and defy him to dream of happiness again.

Faster and faster he walked, until, coming in sight of home, he turned off in the opposite direction, feeling unable to encounter the searching eyes of his mother and sister then. On he went, keeping up the same rapid pace, as if it afforded him relief. He scarcely seemed conscious of where he was going, and was within half a mile of Lynnburgh before he stopped to take breath. Debating within himself whether he should proceed or return, he at length decided to go on.

The clocks were chiming ten when he entered the town, and he went to the inn for something to drink after his toilsome walk. But he remained there only a short time; an impulse he could not resist took him in the direction of the theatre, from which the people were beginning to pour out in a ceaseless stream, their voices echoing loudly in the deserted streets as they discussed the evening's performance. He watched them from the opposite side, for somehow he dared not enter the theatre that night.

The last small group had gone down the street, but still he kept his post, fixing his gaze on a low, narrow door at the side of the building, from which he knew the actors and actresses would presently issue. Nor had he waited long when they appeared, laughing and gesticulating in true dramatic style. One or two of them lingered

about the door, apparently in expectation of another member of the company who had not yet joined them. Kenneth, too, bent a hungry gaze upon the dimly-lighted passage, which was presently darkened by the sweeping folds of a gay robe worn by a queenly figure, who trod with majestic step, and was followed by a man carrying an armful of bouquets. When she passed under the lamp-light, he could see that she also held in her hand another superb bouquet, which she raised frequently to her face as if inhaling its perfume. At the door she drew the hood of her cloak over her head, and looked round with some smart repartee addressed to her companion, who now for the first time became visible.

Kenneth started when the light for a moment fell upon the face of Norman Lesly; until then he had not been aware that he was admitted to the society of Miss Ormond, and the knowledge made him strangely angry. It was with difficulty he could restrain himself from rushing forward and challenging his right to walk by her side. Yet what claim had he to interfere? None, he knew; nevertheless it galled him to think he had been kept in ignorance of this intimacy, both by the object of his passion and by Lesly himself. In that moment he forgot the previous occurrences of that night, forgot everything in his mad jealousy.

He followed them down the street to the inn, which was within a short distance of the theatre. At the door he saw Miss Ormond pause, and after a brief dialogue, in the course of which she seemed to be refusing some request he urged, she took the flowers from his hands and vanished.

Kenneth resolved to satisfy himself as to the extent of Lesly's intimacy with the actress. Accordingly, he waited until he had disengaged himself from the knot of men, who evidently had counted upon another treat at his expense, before announcing his presence.

"Hallo, Errol! where on earth did you come from? Were you in the theatre to-night?" was Lesly's greeting as Kenneth advanced to meet him.

"No, I was not," answered Kenneth in accents that had a peculiarly sharp ring to Lesly's ears, adding immediately afterwards, "I was not aware that you were on such intimate terms with Miss Ormond."

"What do you mean by 'intimate terms'?" queried Lesly, irritated by the question no less

than the tone in which it was put. "Did you see us together just now?"

"Yes, I did."

"Good heavens, Errol, you don't mean to imply that it matters anything to you whether I am intimate with her or not?" exclaimed Lesly, bursting into a loud laugh as he surveyed his companion's averted face. "Pray, who introduced you to Miss Ormond? Wasn't it I? And haven't I as good a right to her favour as yourself? By Jove, Errol, if it has come to that, don't you think the sconer you quit connection with the theatre, and Miss Ormond too, the better for yourself and somebody at the Castle? If it comes to her ears that Mr. Errol has been behind the scenes, woe betide you, that's all."

A great oath burst from the lips of Kenneth Errol, with a fierceness that fairly startled his companion, who stood stock still and regarded him with sheer amazement.

"Are you mad, Errol?" he said at last. "What have I done to merit language of this sort?"

Afraid of betraying himself, and admitting even amid his frenzy the folly and injustice of his unspoken accusation, Kenneth instantly apologised for his violence, merely stating in explanation that he had been annoyed by some things which had occurred that day, and had spoken in a moment of irritation.

Lesly readily accepted the explanation, and in token of forgiveness took his friend's arm and walked amicably on with him, diverting the conversation into a more tranquil channel, and contriving to make himself so agreeable that, on reaching Glenathole, Kenneth accompanied him to his house, where he remained to supper, not coming out till another hour had gone by.

Late next morning he came down to breakfast,

His sister and Betsy were talking with grave faces in the passage, and both regarded him with looks in which fear and pity mingled.

"Kenneth," said Mary in tones strangely sad, "Dr. Kinross has been here, Ada has taken brain fever; he says she is very ill."

His face blanched for a moment, then he said, almost crossly:

"I wanted to see Dr. Kinross. Why did you not tell me when he called?"

"It was early, and I knew you were asleep; and,

besides, he was in too great a hurry to wait," said Mary, her large, honest eyes still bent upon his troubled countenance with a gaze of infinite compassion. "I am going over to the Castle immediately. I will tell you exactly how she is when I return," she added.

"Yes, go," he urged, "and let me hear at dinner-time."

She only waited to pour out his coffee, and then set out on her errand. As yet she knew nothing of the immediate cause of Ada's serious illness, but her fears were fast driving her to the conclusion that it arose from the estrangement she had observed all too plainly between her friend and Kenneth. Even now, however, she clung to the hope that it was merely a misunderstanding, which this illness, serious as it was, would speedily dissipate, and thus effect a cure more potent than any of Dr. Kinross's medicines. She felt convinced that Ada would recover as soon as the misunderstanding between herself and Kenneth was removed, and fortifying herself with this assurance, she hurried on toward the Castle.

But on reaching it the aspect of things there was such as to drive away all her hopefulness. Even Jessy burst into tears when they met, and could not speak for several minutes. Mary grew alarmed, and said anxiously:

"Is she so very ill?"

"She grows worse every hour," sobbed Jessy.
"I have just been in her room, and she doesn't know me. She knows none of us now. Oh! Mary, it's terrible to hear how she talks in her wandering. I can't bear it."

Poor Jessy again gave away to a violent fit of weeping, and paced up and down the room in great agitation. Then, pausing suddenly to listen to a sound which only her quick ears her voice. Come, Mary, come, and hear how she is raving."

The door of the sick-room stood ajar, and Lady Douglas was seen standing at the top of the bed, weeping silently, while the doctor bent over his patient in grave anxiety. Her fair, white arms tossed restlessly about, raised at times to dash back the flowing hair that streamed over her shoulders. The sweet face was pitiably altered under the burning fever that preyed upon it. The fierce light of frenzy glittered in the wide-

open eyes that rolled incessantly about, as if in quest of some object that never came.

As they looked, she sat up in bed, gazing wildly about, until her eve encountered her mother, but without any gleam of recognition in its depths. "Cruel woman," she cried, in accents thin and sharp, "why do you stand there? I never injured you, and yet you come to torment me. Is it not enough that you stole his heart from me?-yes, stole it! I loved him-oh, how I loved him!and Mary knows it. Ask Mary, and she will tell you that I loved him far better than you-my Kenneth! oh, my own Kenneth! Where is Mary? Tell her to bring him back to me. No, not there! don't look for him there! Yonder- don't vou see him?-inst behind the curtain. Speak to him, Mary; he will hear your voice. Oh, if only the people would cease shonting! They won't let him hear. Call louder-louder, I say. Ah, he doesn't hear, and she is taking him away, that cruel woman. Stop her! oh, will nobody stop her, and bring him back to me?"

Mary Errol could endure no more. The words she had heard, incoherent as they were, had revealed to her the secret of her brother's changed feelings; and the further hints supplied by Jessy made the mystery perfectly plain. Almost distracted between shame and grief, she hastened from the scene of misery, for which she felt herself in some vague way to blame.

Oh, what would Kenneth say when he heard those pitiful words that still rang in her ears?

All that day and night she was in an agony of suspense, and long before daylight appeared next morning she was on her way to Douglas Castle, to learn what change for better or worse the morning had brought. Yet she dared not present herself at the house. How could she meet the mild eyes of Lady Douglas, knowing that she was already in possession of the terrible secret regarding Kenneth's perfidy—a secret which only delirium could have wrung from those sweet lips? Had the guilt been her own she could hardly have suffered more that hour when she stood under the dripping trees waiting for the doctor to come out. To think that her brother-he of whom she had been so proud, and hoped so much-should have been capable of such base and heartless cruelty!

She pressed her hands on her face, and wept bitterly. The cold east wind blew raw and keen,

making the bare trees creak and groan; and the icy rain came pitilessly down, soaking the sward and the garments of the sad watcher who paced slowly to and fro; but she scarcely heeded them: all her attention was fixed on that formidable entrance, which seemed to frown her away. The grey dawn was breaking in the eastern sky, and shone with a weird, cold light on the Castle battlements, and on the long lines of windows, from which the inner lights were beginning to pale. Would he never come, that longed-for messenger? Cold and shivering, Mary waited on, her apprehensions growing every instant more intolerable.

At last she saw the groom bringing round a chaise to the front entrance, and by-and-bye Dr. Kinross came out, Sir Edward Douglas accompanying him to the door, and talking earnestly with him.

Dreading to be observed, Mary withdrew under covert of the trees, and hastened to the avenue gates, where she was certain not to miss the doctor on his departure.

"Miss Errol! you here so early?" exclaimed Dr. Kinross, drawing up as she advanced to meet him. "Were you going up to the Castle?"

"Not now, doctor," she replied. "I wanted to ask you how she is this morning."

The kind-hearted man regarded her with a look of such compassion, and withal displayed such unusual embarrassment in her presence just then, that Mary at once recollected he had heard Ada's ravings the day before, and perhaps a great deal besides. She became confused, and was on the verge of tears, when he jumped down and bade her mount to the vacant seat in the conveyance, saying he would drive her home. He did not even give her any opportunity of refusing, but almost lifted her into it, noticing with dismay as he did so that her garments were soaking.

"This will not do, Miss Errol," he exclaimed, almost severely. "You may catch a chill that will throw you into as dangerous a fever as your friend has now, if you persist in coming out on mornings like this. Why, you're shivering all over as it is. Couldn't you have waited at home till I called? I promised to do so."

"I thought I would hear sooner by coming," answered Mary, controlling himself by a great effort. "Tell me what you think of Miss Douglas? Is she any better since yesterday?"

"Oh, no; in cases of fever a good many days must elapse before there is any hope of improvement. It runs its course, and the whole question is whether the patient has strength enough to outlast the attack. Miss Douglas has never had any serious illness before, they tell me: I hope she will weather the storm this time. She had a terrible night of suffering, delirious all the time. I had to give her a narcotic, and left her quieter, but, of course, the effects are only temporary. The tug of war has to come yet. However, we shall do our best, and you may be sure I will notify you of every change in her condition."

And he kept his word; but week after week went past without bringing any change for the better. As the fever reached its climax, another physician from Edinburgh was summoned, who remained for two days at the Castle. At the end of that time there came a real change.

Mary had gone up early on the morning of the second day to the Castle, and met Dr. Kinross as he was coming out from it. Almost speechless with agitation, she ran toward him, crying:

"Oh, doctor, has it come? Will she recover?"
"With God's blessing, she will," he reverently answered.

Then burst forth the tears which terror had long sealed, and Mary, not waiting to hear more, sought the deep shade of the trees, where she could weep unseen, and relieve her overwhelmed heart.

But she did not prolong this rare indulgence: her instant thought was to run home with the good news as quickly as possible.

Kenneth, pale and wretched-looking, was alone in the parlour when she reached it. Forgetting everything else in her joy at that moment, she flew to him, and, with her arms clasped about his neck, solbed out: "Oh! Kenneth, thank God, she is going to live!"

She felt his breast heave convulsively for a moment, then, with something like a groan, he put her from him, and went rapidly out of the house. He had never been wont to show emotion before anyone, and Mary understood his abruptness on this occasion. He, too, had suffered during those past weeks. Many a night she had heard him pacing the floor of his room till morning, coming down with a haggard countenance that betrayed the misery his lips had never con-

fessed. And although she pitied him, Mary rejoiced to see how deeply he was suffering, for in that suffering she recognised the promise of a genuine repentance, which would hastily embrace this almost despaired of opportunity of making full restitution for the past.

There had been times, indeed, during the crisis of Ada's illness when she became alarmed for him. He looked like one on the point of distraction. They feared to speak to him, she especially, to whom he invariably appealed for information regarding the progress of the fell malady that might render him, in the eyes of strict justice, nothing less than a murderer. And sometimes, when he rushed at night out of the house, they almost felt compelled to go after him lest he should do himself some injury.

Now, however, hope was beginning to shine from out the weary gloom that had encompassed their lives through all those days of pain and suspense: and they took courage, waiting for a yet brighter dawn, which would even yet revive and bring to fruition the buds of promise so cruelly blighted by the chill breath of disappointment.

Yes, Ada Douglas was slowly struggling back to life, and though her strength recruited itself by almost imperceptible degrees, it soon became evident that she would by-and-bye come amongst them all once more. Yet when she rose from her couch of suffering, they saw in her a change deeper and more permanent than any the fever could have wrought. They missed the joyous flow of returning spirits, which is usually the accompaniment of genuine convalescence. The awakening to life brought no gladness with it, but rather a patient resignation, and a meek endurance most touching to see, and yet far from encouraging to those who knew the secret of her illness. Increasing strength brought no change in this settled sadness, though it enabled her more successfully to conceal it.

For as she strove to gather together the disjointed fragments memory had preserved of her conscious hours during the fever, the fear that she had betrayed her secret in some of those fits of wild delirium began to prey upon her mind, and she scrutinised the faces of her friends to ascertain whether this were really the case. But so guarded were they in their words and actions, that she could not discover what they knew, and endeavoured,

meanwhile, to disguise her pain as best she could.

The fear, however, remained; and one day, when she was left alone with her sister, the desire to know the truth overcame her timidity, and she asked what she had said while delirious.

"Oh, a great many things, Ada," replied Jessy, determined to pass the question off with a jest. "I couldn't remember half the nonsense you talked. Why, one night you thought that papa was the Caliph of Bagdad, and mamma the princess with the unpronounceable name in the Arabian Nights; and another time you declared poor Dr. Kinross was an evil genius, trying to work some spell upon you, and you nearly knocked the medicine bottle out of his hand. Oh, you have no idea what ridiculous things you said; we never paid any attention to them."

Jessy was much too honest a character to excel in any attempt at dissembling, and her sister quickly detected under this superficial answer a studied reserve of something which she wished to keep concealed.

"Yes, I know," she said, after a pause, "I must have said a great many foolish things of that sort; but did I never speak of—of my own friends as my friends? Did I never talk of things that were going on at the time I took ill?"

"At times you did, but only in a confused way, and mixed up with so many absurd vagaries that one could hardly have known what you were alluding to," responded Jessy, priding herself on her adroitness in parrying the question.

But her very anxiety to conceal the truth had made her too guarded, and Ada still further suspected that her secret was already known, and, hazarding one more question that would prove a crucial test, she said:

"I suppose I talked sometimes of the Errols?"

Jessy's face bent lower over her embroidery as
she briefly answered:

"Oh, yes; I suppose you did. But don't think of the fever any more, dear Ada; you are getting well now. It's more cheerful to talk of what you'll do when you get up again and move about."

Her embarrassment was too obvious to escape notice, and Ada turned her face to the wall, and did not speak again for a good while. What suffering she endured in those few silent minutes none would ever know. When she spoke again, however, her voice was calm.

"Jessy," she said, "I want to see Mary Errol. Will you go and ask her to come to me?"

"Oh, Ada, Dr. Kinross said you were not to see anyone for a good while, except ourselves," objected the anxious sister, dreading the effect of such an interview.

"Then I will wait until he gives me permission," was the quiet rejoinder; "but, sooner or later, I must see her. I feel I won't get better until I do."

When Dr. Kinross called later in the course of the day, she put the question to him, and met with a decided negative.

"Out of the question; out of the question!" he declared. "Pooh! your life wouldn't be worth sixpence; and having got you through such a hard tussle, we're not going to risk the chance of another. No, no, my dear; wait till you're a shade stronger, and then we'll let you see Miss Errol."

From this decision, however, he was ere long obliged to recede, as he perceived that the denial of her request was likely to be attended with consequences more serious than the interview itself could produce. Accordingly, he consulted with her parents, who, knowing that he had heard as much of poor Ada's ravings as they, had taken him into full confidence, assured that he would hold it sacred, both for their sakes and his own professional credit. And they consented to Mary's visit the more readily as they knew she could perfectly control herself, and had too much natural prudence to say or do anything likely to injure their daughter.

So Mary came, with feelings scarcely less painful than these of Ada herself. She remained only a short time, however, in accordance with the doctor's strict injunctions; and, as Jessy was present all the time, Ada's communication was not made.

Nor was it made until she had left her room, and was allowed to take a short drive in the sunshine. On one of these occasions Mary, at her special request, accompanied her, Jessy having by an implicit agreement remained at home.

They had driven only a little way, when Ada said:

"You came often to know how I was, Mary, Jessy tells me. I knew you would. Were you ever beside me when I was ill?"

"Only once, dear Ada, and then only for a few minutes," was Mary's answer.

"Was I wandering at the time?" pursued Ada.

"Yes," responded Mary, not trusting herself to say another word for fear of what she might next be asked.

"Tell me what you heard me say," was Ada's immediate inquiry, spoken in tones that made evasion impossible.

"Oh, don't ask me," entreated poor Mary, in great distress. "Indeed, I cannot speak of it."

Ada turned a searching look on her companion's face, which revealed all she wished to know. She turned away to hide the tears that rained from her eyes, and did not speak again for several minutes.

Mary's own tears were falling fast, and she had great difficulty in suppressing the sobs that rose to her lips. But Ada's arms were soon round her neck, and the poor girl, laying her head on that faithful bosom, gave vent to her grief.

"Oh! Mary," she cried, "I see you know it all; you know my heart is broken. Oh, if I had only died that terrible night when I saw him with her! Death would have been welcome then—ay, it would be welcome now."

She stopped through excess of grief, burying her face in the folds of Mary's dress, and clinging to her as if for aid; then she resumed, in the same heartrending tones:

"I saw him, Mary, bending over that woman, with the smile I used to think was mine alone; and I saw her looking up into his face as though he belonged to her. Oh, the hour of death will not be half so bitter as that hour was to me. Until then I did not know how much I loved him; and, oh! Mary, pity me, for I love him yet."

A shudder passed over her frame, almost convulsive in its intensity. Mary gathered her closer to her bosom, murmuring soothing words in her ear—the only solace she could bestow.

But a resolution was formed in her mind that hour which she determined to carry into execution without delay; and as soon as the drive was over, and Ada once more under her mother's care, she hurried home so as to meet her brother and tell him what Ada had said.

He was not there when she arrived, and she went away so as to have the opportunity of making her communication in private.

Not far from the village she met him, and proceeded to relate the particulars of her interview with poor Ada. He listened with knitted brows, and eyes that glanced wildly about as if in quest of some way of escape from the torture he was enduring.

"Oh! Kenneth, how could you be so cruel as to forsake one who loved you so truly for a woman whose very profession proves her to be unworthy of—""

Mary stopped, arrested by the almost savage gleam of his eye, as he confronted her and said:

" Mary, say anything you like against me: I can bear it; but if you cast the slightest aspersion on the character of Beatrice Ormond, I tell you I will never forgive it. She may be only an actress, but she is worthy of the love of a better man than I. And, hear me, Mary, although I confess I have wronged Ada Douglas, and would willingly make any reparation in my power if I thought she would forgive me, yet I tell you I never knew what love was till I met Beatrice Ormond. I say it as before God; and if I had met her a year ago, I never would have been plighted to Ada. Blame me, curse me, if you like, I could not help it: when I saw Beatrice, I felt toward her a love as much beyond my love for Ada as heaven is beyond earth. It seized me with a power I could not resist; it has taken possession of my whole being, and I cannot master it. I have tried-yes, Mary, wicked though you think me, I have tried-but in vain. And even now, to prove that I am sincere in saying I wish to make atonement to Ada, I would willingly promise to see Beatrice no more, if only she would forgive me, and take what love I can offer."

He stopped, breathing hard, and Mary, seeing in this avowal a gleam of hope, said:

"Write to her, and ask her to forgive you. Surely, if you saw her as I did to-day, no other love would find a place in your heart."

He hesitated a moment before replying:

"I will write this very night, if you will take the letter to her to-morrow."

Overjoyed, Mary promised to be his messenger; and late that night he handed her a sealed note, which she took away with her next morning, her kind heart beating with a tremulous hopefulness as to what its results might be.

Ada was walking in the garden that day with her mother and sister by her side; but as soon as they were gone, Mary, after a few premonitory words, delivered the letter. They were sitting on a garden-seat, where the April sunshine fell, and in its radiance Ada's pale face, with its quivering features, was strongly illuminated, so that Mary could trace each change of expression.

These were the words on which her hungry eyes were bent:—

"Dear and much-wronged Ada,—If you will deign to read these words, written in deep sorrow of heart by one who has forfeited all claim to your slightest consideration, hear what I have to say—all I can say in my distress.

"I cannot undo what I have done, nor ever hope for your confidence again, yet I wish most earnestly to make what reparation is in my power; and that is, to prove by genuine repentance the sincerity of my regret for the misery I have caused you. If you can forgive me, I will count no sacrifice too great to merit your forgiveness, and will endeavour, to the utmost of my power, to make you happy.

"I know I am most unworthy of you, and cannot but regret that you ever bestowed the treasure of your affection upon one so little deserving of it, and so unfit to requite it, as such affection richly merited; yet if, knowing what I am and all that I am not, you can extend to me your forgiveness, and accept the only restitution I can offer, it will be my honest endeavour henceforth to secure your happiness by all means in my power.

"Awaiting your reply, which I trust will be merciful, I am, dear Ada, your sincere, though erring friend, "Kenneth Errol."

Mary had been studying in breathless suspense the successive emotions reflected in that expressive face, over which the waves of colour passed in rapid alternation with a deadly pallor that gradually became permanent, overspreading every feature. The vivid changes gave place to a settled rigidity, and a cold, proud smile flickered for a moment on her lips as she returned the letter to Mary's hands.

"Tell him," she said, "that Ada Douglas exacts no payment of a vow repented of."

"Oh! Ada," cried Mary, imploringly.

She could say no more, for she saw that Kenneth's letter had revealed the true state of his feelings toward her; and she knew the Douglas nature too well to doubt that the decision was irrevocable.

Her grief overcame her, and she wept bitterly. But not a tear fell from Ada's eyes: there was a stern look on her face, as though she would never shed another, and she rose calmly to return to the Castle.

Mary followed in silence, her sympathy too deep for words, her love too true to whisper false hopes.

When they reached the entrance, Ada turned and, kissing her friend's tear-stained face, said:

"This is our last meeting for a long time, Mary. To-morrow we leave for Italy—the doctor has ordered it—and I may not return for many months. But, whatever happens, remember nothing can ever change my affection for you. I have always loved you, and always shall, and I know you will think of me and pray for me sometimes. Good-bye, dearest Mary. If we never meet again here, I hope——"

Someone called, and with a bursting heart Mary tore herself away.

CHAPTER XIX.

BEHIND THE SCENES.

THROUGH a labyrinth of tortuous, ill-lighted passages, a tall, distinguished-looking man was threading his way. He seemed perfectly familiar with them, however, as he did not once pause until, mounting a somewhat rickety stair, he found himself in the midst of a very strange scene indeed.

Scattered all around were the paraphernalia of the stage, which, viewed from this side, presented a most grotesque appearance. Tilted over against one another were long strips of dirty pasteboard representing Corinthian columns; other pieces, still more unshapely, representing the battlements and turrets of ancient castles, rugged cliffs, houses with balconies in front, ornamental arches, &c., were huddled together in endless confusion. Tables, chairs, gobiets of gilded pasteboard, swords, helmets, and suits of armour were piled about everywhere.

A vista of huge frames covered with coarsely smeared canvas ran down two sides of the stage. Overhead were suspended lines of similarly painted canvas and rows of flaring lamps. A medley of ropes and pulleys crossed the stage in all directions, in connection with the various scenes which were pulled up and down by means of them. At this moment several of them were in operation, as

the scene-shifters and stage-carpenters bustled about their work, in preparation for the performance soon to commence.

The great dark curtain in front waved in the draught, allowing the actors and actresses, whose toilets were already completed, the relaxation of promenading on the boards without the theatrical strut they would have to assume immediately; a privilege of which they were taking full advantage. The King of Denmark, for instance, was engaging in a boxing match with his page, who in this case was a slim young lady of lively manners. Horatio was dancing a hornpipe with the venerable Polonius. The Ghost of Hamlet's father was squatted on the King's throne (to which he had, no doubt, a valid right), drinking a capacious glass of beer, and winking villainously to the Oueen, who had just been peeping through a hole in the curtain at the audience, impatiently awaiting the commencement of the performance. Hamlet himself, in his funereal habiliments, was marching lazily up and down the stage, conning over his arduous part in a ragged play-book he held in his hand. Rosencrantz was assisting Guildenstern to buckle on a refractory gauntlet. Laertes and Osric were going through a fencing match. Some of the humbler personages of the play, such as the soldiers and attendants, were lending practical assistance in arranging the scenery.

But at the sound of a warning bell, which tinkled as the concluding bars of the orchestra died away, they scampered off to the right and left, and only two remained patrolling before the Castle of Elsinore, when the curtain rose amid enthusiastic applause from the spectators.

How unreal it all looked, those coarsely painted scenes; those men and women tricked out in their fantastic array, whose every gesture was now so obviously studied! How loud and discordant seemed the voices of the actors declaiming on the stage! How artificial was the whole spectacle! Strange that it should elicit such delight from those who were gathered to witness it! Ah, but this was the wrong side of the picture!—And the real side, too.

With a feeling akin to disgust, the solitary spectator at the wings turned away from the glare of the stage, and overtaking the call-boy, despatched him with a note for Miss Ormond.

In a short while the messenger returned, saying

Miss Ormond could not see him just now, as she was just getting ready to go on the stage.

"Run back again and ask what time she will see me," was the reply to this message.

Off darted the boy, treading his way with marvellous dexterity among the maze of ropes and scenery, to the actress's dressing-room, from which he presently returned with the announcement that Miss Ormond would see him at the close of the performance.

The answer evidently disappointed him, but, obliged to be content with it, he retraced his steps and ascended to the stage-box which he had hired for his exclusive use.

There, within the shade of the curtain, he watched for the appearance on the stage of that peerless woman whose beauty and genius had made her the idol of the day.

She came at length, amid a motley crowd who assembled in the court scene that introduces the principal personages of the play. But they appeared but shadows in comparison with this "bright particular star," whose very presence evoked a vociferous cheer of welcome.

The occupant of the stage-box glared down upon them savagely, as though their admiration were hateful to him; and he turned an eager, burning look upon the white-robed figure on whom every eye in the theatre was riveted.

She seemed almost conscious of his gaze, for she studiously avoided glancing in his direction, then and throughout the entire scene. He knew the meaning of this, for once before she had remarked that, during the performance of any part, she scrupulously shunned everything likely to distract her attention; a rule she never infringed. Though, indeed, the temptation to do so existed only in the early scenes of a play: once fairly into the spirit of it, she was lost to all consciousness of extraneous things, becoming, under the inspiration of genius, the very character she personated. And herein lay the secret of her power. For those who knew her, she seemed to possess two distinct natures; one for ordinary practical life, and another for the stage. It was hardly possible, seeing one of her impersonations, to believe that she was the same woman whose simple, natural conversation had charmed them an hour ago. Yet so it was, though she herself could not explain this sort of twofold existence she led. With her, acting

was rather a passion than a profession, loved and pursued for its own sake, not for the remuneration or the praise it brought. The capacity to delineate human passion, in all its manifold phases, was inborn, and had led her to the stage as her peculiar sphere.

Perhaps there was only one in the theatre that night to whom her performance did not afford pleasure, and who, in fact, regretted to see her there. In the eyes of that exceptional spectator she was demeaning herself by exposing to the general gaze her rare accomplishments and her beauty. What right had they to delight themselves with either? How dare they feast their eyes upon her and applaud her to the echo? More intolerable still, was he to sit passively there while some worthless knave wound his arm about her, and even feigned to kiss her?

It was with difficulty he could muster patience to await the conclusion of this scene; after which he left the box, and made his way back to the stage.

On reaching it, a deafening shout was ringing through the theatre, and Miss Ormond was being led before the footlights to receive the homage of an enraptured audience. The young man who had personated Ophelia's brother, Laertes, accompanied her, and now held the curtain aside for her to pass, following when she had again retired.

He was addressing some complimentary remarks to her, to which she seemed to pay little attention, when someone advanced from the shadow of the wing and placed himself before them.

Miss Ormond visibly started, and extending her hand with some hesitation, said:

"I did not expect to see you till after the play, Mr. Errol. I wish you could have waited till then."

"Why so, Beatrice?" said he in expostulatory tones. "Are you offended with me?"

"Certainly not: we have not met so frequently of late, that you could have given me any cause for offence. But the piece to-night is a trying one for me, and I must reserve all my energies for it; so you will pardon my leaving you till it is over. Adieu for the present."

She was gone ere he found voice to reply, and, more discontented than ever, he repaired to his post of observation, where he was doomed to spend other two weary hours. He took no notice of what was passing on the stage, until that affecting scene in the third act in which Ophelia returns to her estranged lover the keepsakes given her in happier hours, with these fine words:—

"Take these again; for to the noble mind, Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind."

The actress spoke them with a touching pathos and warmth, as if they came from her own heart, and with an emphasis that made her lover's pulses quicken. Was it vanity that suggested the thought that they were meant for his ear while addressed to the actor?

He watched her greedily throughout the scene, hardly able to endure the spectacle of even her counterfeited love for another. And during the next, when Hamlet threw himself down at her feet, gazing boldly up into her face, he felt ready to take him by the throat for his sacrilege. It was torment to look on and see it.

But even his passionate love could not render him insensible to the spell which, in common with the admiring thousands, he owned when, in dishevelled robes and decked with flowers, Ophelia burst upon them, singing her snatches of wild, disjointed song, alternately sad and gay. Was it really Beatrice? Or had she the magician's power of transforming herself into another being at will? It almost seemed so, for he felt somehow afraid and uneasy as he watched that marvellous impersonation of madness. Her very features had undergone a change, he thought; and her voice had in it an unnatural ring, as weird in its laughter as thrilling in its sadness, which impressed him painfully as he listened.

He felt relieved when she vanished from the scene. The loud applause made him pity her. What an unwholesome atmosphere it was for one so young and beautiful. He wondered how she could endure it. To him her very presence there was becoming insupportable; and this night's experience had confirmed him in a resolution he meant to execute without more delay. He knew she would appear no more on the stage that night, and so repaired once again to those mysterious regions which form so striking a satire on stage enchantments. There he waited for a considerable length of time before she came.

He was standing at one of the wings, surveying

the mimic funeral on the stage, with thoughts and feelings very far removed from the spectacle before his eyes, when a soft, musical voice at his ear said:

"Are you one of the mourners at my burial?"

He started, and turned round with a delight too obvious to escape the actress's notice. But feigning not to observe it, she continued:

"Suppose I were under that pall, and the funeral a real one, would it affect you with any more grief than the people vonder?"

"I hardly know what you mean by asking me so strange a question," said he, gazing intently on the beautiful face beside him.

"Well, if you stand here you will see the faces of the people," she returned, making room for him. "Look how much they seem to feel it: some of them are even in tears; yet supposing I were to die to-morrow, not a real tear would be shed for me. It is the actress they prize, not me. Now, do you understand my question?"

"Perfectly, Beatrice; and do you class me with the vulgar herd yonder, or even with your more select admirers? Have my words and actions so belied me, that you really form so poor an estimate of my regard?"

He saw her breathing quickly for a few moments ere she replied in more earnest tones:

"To you, as to them, I am only an actress: of my real self you know nothing. You see me in the glitter of the stage, in an artificial, unreal existence, which *must* lead to a wrong estimate of my character. It is impossible for you to know me as I am. How, then, can I be sure that it is not the counterfeits of my profession that have attracted you rather than—"

"Beatrice, listen to me," cried the ardent lover.

"This night, when I saw you acting in the play, I felt grieved in my very soul to think that one so beautiful as you should be condemned to such an existence, and I——"

"Ah," she interrupted, "it is always the same refrain; my beauty."

She uttered the word with a sneer of perfect scorn that curled her proud lip, and made her once more a queen, then continued: "If you would have me believe there is anything better in your regard than what I am accustomed to receive from vain or profligate men, never mention that word to me again. It has been dinned into my ears until

I am sick of its very sound. It reminds me that all of me the world prizes is my face, which an hour's sickness may change, and so leave me without a friend. Had not the mere love of acting sustained me, long ere now I should have left the stage, for I care not for the world's applause; its flattery I disdain."

"I know it, Beatrice; and what you have said just now only confirms me in my resolution to ask you to leave this horrible life," responded the lover, drawing nearer as if he would shield her from the glare of the footlights which had thrown their fierce light too long already on that fair face.

The words startled her, and she darted a penetrating look into his face as it inclined toward her own.

"I mean it, Beatrice," he pursued in the same winning voice; "I cannot bear to see you exposed to the gaze of every low hound, and liable to so many dangers. You were made for a higher sphere; there is none you would not adorn. Beatrice, listen to me," he entreated as she shrank from him and tried to withdraw her hand, "If I had a crown to bestow, I would willingly lay it at your feet. I have not even wealth to offer you, but such as I have I ask you to accept-the love of my heart, which has been yours ever since I saw you. Yes, Beatrice, it is you yourself I love, not your genius, not even your beauty. You are to me as no other ever was or can be. With you any existence would be endurable ay, even the stage itself, which I would embrace for your dear sake. Without you, what is the best life can offer? Come, Beatrice, say you will grant me my heart's wish, and let me devote myself from this time henceforth to you and you only-my greatest aim, your happiness."

Many a time, both before and afterwards, this woman stood, the crowned idol of a nation's worshipping admiration; many a time the trophies of their favour were showered at her feet; many a time was her ear assailed by the flattery of those of high degree; but never did human praise and homage awaken in her heart a rapture such as throbbed there now as she listened to those sweet words, and looked into the face whose beauty had bound her very soul to him as by a resistless spell. It had shone out upon her from the promiscuous multitude like a bright star in the heavens, and from the first moment she beheld it, its influence pene-

trated to her heart, sinking deeper and deeper as time went on. From all the most enchanting dreams of poetry, which had been the atmosphere of her life from early youth, she seemed suddenly to awake to find them realised in the person of this fascinating stranger, on whom her own romantic, high-toned nature conferred an excellence, an ideal perfection never yet owned by mortal man since Eden's innocence was lost. To her he was the embodiment of all that constitutes goodness and worth. Among men he walked as a god, and she bowed her heart in adoration before him-that proud heart which had been proof against the insidions wiles of many whose attractions might have been supposed more likely to take it captive, enforced as they were by the prestige of noble hirth.

And how was this? Ah, let philosophy analyse and dogmatise as it will, it never can explain this mystery of beauty—this strange influence which, from the beginning of time, has proved one of the strongest, if not *the* strongest, in human life.

It had never occurred to the actress to question how it was she loved this man alone of all others; the mere consciousness of loving him was too sweet to leave room for any investigation as to its cause. Therefore was it the more strange that now, when he laid his heart at her feet, the apprehension of danger in this attachment for the first time presented itself, and drove her to examine the real state of things between them. But with the knowledge of their relations to each other there came no explanation of how it was those relations had arisen, nor any clue as to the possible solution of the difficulties attending them.

It was of these difficulties the actress was thinking as she listened to those impassioned utterances, and during the pause she made before replying she had gone through a long course of reflection, the result of which appeared in her next words.

"Have you considered," she asked in low, almost solemn tones, "what this implies? Do you know it entails the loss of all your friends, the loss of your place in society? You are, as your name implies, of noble descent; I am but an actress, and by an alliance with me you forfeit all—friends, reputation, money. Are you prepared to make such a sacrifice?"

In his impatient ardour he thought this answer

cold, almost calculating. It compelled him, also, to admit the considerations which he had been trying to exclude from his mind altogether. The truth of her words was incontestable, however, nor did he even attempt to denv it. Already his desertion of poor Ada Douglas had estranged from him the respect and confidence of his friends-an estrangement which his intimacy with this woman had rendered so complete, that there seemed scarcely any possibility of its being bridged over. In fact, he was well aware that, if he married her, he must leave Glenathole and its neighbourhood for ever. Only one hope sustained him in the contemplation of such a result, namely, that when once their minds were disabused of the prejudice they entertained against Beatrice Ormond, they would relent, and own that she was as worthy of their love as though she had not belonged to a discredited profession. Glenathole was becoming more and more distasteful to him, so much so that, as he anticipated the return of the Douglases, the prospect of leaving it was very welcome, and would scarcely have cost him a thought but for his mother and sister and brother, who, despite their present attitude of displeasure, were, nevertheless, dear to him, too dear to be relinquished without a terrible pang.

This was the consideration that made him hesitate for an instant as the question was put to him, whether he was prepared to make a sacrifice of all he held dear for her sake,

But it was only for an instant: one look at that fair face banished regard for any consequences, be they what they might; he was prepared to hazard all on this one stake.

"Yes," he replied, with a boldness and enthusiasm that disarmed her fears. "These things, precious as they are, are not to be compared with your love. Their loss will occasion me little regret, if only you are mine. Oh, believe it, Beatrice, and let me put my words to the test. If you knew how deeply I love you, I am sure you would not hesitate."

A change almost sublime in its beauty came over her face as once more she met the loving look in his eyes and heard his thrilling tones. She crept nearer, gazing on him with a sort of appealing tenderness that touched him more even than the words she now spoke.

"Then hear what I have to say," she whispered.

"This is not the first time I have had to listen to protestations of affection from men who sought only my ruin. Until I met you, I had come to exclude all such admirers from my very thoughts, determined to connect myself in no way with the world beyond my own profession, and to live only for the stage. You have made me waver in this resolution, for I cannot think you capable of trying to deceive me. You would not look and speak as you have done, if you were not sincere. I am too much accustomed to counterfeits not to detect them; and I know you are in earnest. But how can I be sure that, when I have discarded all stage trappings, and you see me destitute of all disguises, and away from my present surroundings, your admiration will not cool, and your love cool with it?"

"You forget that I have often seen you, dear Beatrice, without your stage ornaments, as now," he responded. "Will it satisfy you if I say that you are more beautiful in my eyes without them? Nay, more, I have a feeling of pain when you assume them: you seem then to put off your own, your better self, and, though I cannot but admire your acting, it now pains me somehow, I cannot tell why. Only I am terribly reluctant to see one I love so well exposed to the rude gaze of the mob. No, my beautiful Beatrice, it is you, not the actress, I love."

She paused as if debating within herself many grave probabilities before returning an answer; when she did, her manner was serious and impressive.

"Look around you," she said. "This is the sphere in which I have been educated. From childhood the stage has been my home, and though I have only been a few years before the footlights. I have been accustomed all my life to look upon a successful career there as my highest ambition. All my views of life have been derived from the theatre and those who form its members; I have scarcely any knowledge at all of society outside of our little world. I have told you that, though there are many things connected with the profession which disgust me, I nevertheless love it: acting is with me a passion. Think, then, how hard it must be for me to alter my mode of life, and to accustom myself to the conventionalities of society, from which I have been all my life entirely free. How do I know I should even so far succeed as to save you from embarrassment among your friends, supposing any still own you after you marry me?"

"Your own natural refinement will make you an ornament to any society," he rejoined. "The theatre seems to have taught you nothing but what is pure and elevating; and there are none who can compare with you in intellectual accomplishments. But there is another more vital question, which let me ask you. What have I to offer you in compensation for all the adulation and exciting pleasure you must forfeit in marrying me?"

The seriousness vanished like darkness before the dawn, and a radiant smile overspread her features as she replied:

"The love of my husband will be more precious to me than all the world's flattery; a kind smile of approval from him will be a rich compensation for the loss of the empty admiration that is my only portion here."

"Then you will be my own, my very own?" he cried in rapturous joy. "You are willing to entrust yourself and your happiness to my keeping?"

"Yes; you have won my heart, and I can never recall the love I have given you," she said; then added, with a fervour solemn in its intensity, "God deal with you as you deal with it."

"Amen," he responded, and he led her away as the great dark curtain came down on the scene, and the motley crew on the stage began to disperse to the green-room.

When they had gained the quiet street, and, with her arm pinioned close to his side, she was walking with him toward the inn where, with several others of the company, she lodged, she suddenly asked in her direct, impulsive fashion:

"Why have you deserted me so completely those last ten days?"

Had her arm been on the other side, she must have felt the great leap his heart gave at those words. What would she have thought, had she known all that had happened during those past ten days? It was well for her, well for him, that the darkness concealed the guilty flush that suffused his cheek as the memory of her whose heart he had broken was thus suddenly revived.

Before he could frame an answer, she resumed: "Were you offended because I bestowed too much notice on your friend Mr. Lesly, that last night we were together? I thought you looked very dis-

pleased, and I wanted to tease you a little. But you didn't suppose me serious, I hope?"

"No; but I am inclined to regard him as a rival, Beatrice," he replied, welcoming any means of evading that ominous question, "and hope you won't tempt me to be jealous again. I know he admires you—as who does not?—and if he were to presume to——"

"He will not; I won't give him another opportunity. To be candid with you, I am not inclined to like him. There is a boldness in his addresses too like what I have been obliged at times to receive from would-be friends to win anything but contempt from me."

"Don't show it, however, Beatrice. If you were to offend him, he has it in his power to injure me materially; we are associated in business, you know. Indeed, it will be necessary to conceal our engagement for a time until I have spoken to my own family about it, and have made some provision for future emergencies. You see I am in earnest, Beatrice, and am not afraid to contemplate the future."

"I tremble when I think what that future may be for you, Kenneth," she said, in accents more beautiful to his ears than any he had ever listened to in the theatre; "yet, if the worst should happen, if through marrying me you forfeit your chances of success, remember, there is always one resource, namely, my own profession. They tell me I may rise to great eminence, and command any salary I please. It may be exaggeration, yet I believe I have not done all I can do, and if the people continue to like me as they have hitherto done, we shall do very well. And I'm sure I should like the stage a great deal better if my husband were always with me to defend me against-against the things that have made me unhappy in it. Perhaps, too, he would not be so jealous of me then."

She uttered the last words in the arch way he had seen her adopt when playing Portia, or her name-sake Beatrice in. "Much Ado about Nothing." It made her irresistibly attractive, especially after those generous words; and he caught her in his arms in passionate fervour, feeling that he had won a prize that was more than a recompense for the greatest loss he could sustain.

"My noble Beatrice," he murmured, "I could never cease to be jealous of you. But I trust your talents will never be turned to merchandise on my account. No; I have youth and sufficient ability to carry me to an honourable independence, and, with such a powerful incentive as your love, I must succeed. Already I feel stronger to cope with difficulties than ever I did in my life. There is nothing I would not venture for your sake, my queen, my good angel, so powerful an inspiration is your love to me. And oh, Beatrice, I never knew what happiness was till to-night! I have no words to convey to you any idea of my joy, now that you are mine—mine only, mine always. Can you say half as much, my Beatrice?"

"No; although my lips have been very familiar with the language of love, I find I am not eloquent in my own cause; but this I do say, that your love is to me more precious than anything else on earth, and that, having it, I can bid defiance to the world, and dare it to do its worst."

Brave words, and true as well as brave, for she who uttered them was prepared to venture life itself for the sake of this man she so devotedly loved.

And he—what thought he as he retraced his steps that night to the home around which clung so many associations touching another who had loved him well in the days gone by? Did the image of her sweet face never rise up to challenge this dear-bought joy? Were no words echoing in his ears wrung from her broken heart but a few days ago?

If so, they were repulsed as hateful things. Yes, the very memory of that previous attachment had become odious. Contrasted with the vivid, soulabsorbing passion now reigning in his breast, it appeared but a sickly sentiment, for which he almost despised himself now. In connection with it he had but one strong desire, and that was, that Ada Douglas would forget him and her attachment to him as completely as he had forgotten both her and it. Once assured that she had done so, the one alloy in his happiness would be removed.

Truly, man was not the author of those words, so uncomplimentary to his nature—"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.
Who can know it?"



A FRIENDLY CAUTION.

By J. R. CLIFFORD.

URING the last year or two there have appeared several manuals, some of which have been largely advertised, professing to be guides to authorship, and published specially for the benefit of young men (and women) whose tendencies lie in that direction. If these manuals had simply taught the art of literary composition, discussing the questions of matter and manner, with hints for the formation of a good, concise, vet graceful style, they might have been deemed useful rather than otherwise. But in so far as they tend to inspire the conceited, or too hopeful amongst the host of budding authors, with ideas sadly delusive as to the possibilities before them, these works are calculated to do some amount of mischief. A few of them, indeed, utter slight cautions or warnings, but they do not speak out with sufficient clearness, nor give the proofs they might furnish, that, save in very rare cases, a young man cannot hope to make a decent living either by writing books or by contributing articles to magazines. The utter precariousness of the former is, indeed, self-evident to those who have any acquaintance with the book world, and the mysteries of publishing, whether the enterpriser publishes on his own account and at his own risk, or whether he makes an arrangement-if he can-with some firm, either to allow him a portion of the profits or to purchase his MS.

The latter, by the way, as matters are now, very few publishers are disposed to do. Leaving out of the question certain technical books, also those of travel or adventure (and it is only now and then that works of these classes are produced by young authors), the only books likely to afford him solid profit are novels, supposing he can write such as may hit the mood of the hour. Few even of these pass through a number of editions, and it may be safely asserted that modern tales, whatever be their price, are seldom remunerative to the author, and, in many instances, not to the publisher.

The aspirant of either sex is probably more likely to be enchanted by the prospect of becoming a contributor to the magazines and journals, of which such a host is displayed upon bookstalls. It is delightful to think of the realms of nature and art, which afford so vast a variety of subjects for the exercise of the pen, and pleasant also to contemplate in imagination thousands of readers gratified by the perusal of our articles, while the regular cheques transmitted by the editor afford an additional encouragement. Alas! the reality is mostly found to be far different from what it is pictured in some romances, where authors are made to figure as successful individuals who have discovered a mine of ore that they can work at will. Articles which editors will accept, and the public read, frequently involve laborious research; their preparation must at times put a severe strain upon brain and nerve; the honorarium also is, from necessity, owing to the cheapening of periodicals, very inadequate, and its payment apt to be deferred. To one who can cast a retrospective glance over the field for thirty years past, the conclusion is inevitable, that the position of writers for the periodical press has not undergone a favourable change in this age of revolution, and it must remain doubtful how far the future will alter

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matters. The hurry of modern life, and its keen competition, have entered the realms of literature, shaking it to its centre.

We cannot wonder that to many who contemplate the multitude of our weekly and monthly periodicals in 1805, it seems a natural supposition that these must furnish employment to a great company of authors; and so they do. Yet it is also true that the number of these, of all shades of ability, has increased far beyond the requirements of our very prolific press. Education it is that has so enormously added to the readers of our century since the accession of Victoria (not to go further back); hence the demand for magazines, and the cheapening of the bulk to suit the means of all: and no doubt authors would be glad if education had done this, and no more. It was inevitable. however, that education should multiply authors by rendering a certain mediocrity easy of attainment, and by leading many to entertain delusive hopes of wealth or fame attainable by literary work; and the first attempts of the bulk are sure to be made in the direction of writing magazine articles. One consequence of this is that many volunteers are quite willing to write unremunerated-either for the sake of seeing themselves in print, and parading the fact among their friends, or because they hope that at some future time the money benefit will come. And it is, of course, a generally understood thing that neophytes in authorship must expect to do a certain amount of work gratis

To explain more fully the character of the competition now general, it may be stated, that in particular directions there is a special increase of writers, arising from causes sufficiently obvious. Amongst clergymen and ministers of almost every denomination there are to be found, nowadays. many who contribute to the periodicals of the time articles, sketches, and essays upon a great variety of subjects; whereas, some forty or fifty years ago, clerical authors were few, and those wrote chiefly on religious or moral themes. The change which has come over the position of woman through educational progress, and the opening up to her of new channels of activity, has led a large number of women to devote all, or part, of their time to writing for magazines; and some of them have done as well, even better, than men in the lines along which they have worked.

Another circumstance decidedly unfavourable to those seeking literary work is the extensive accumulation of periodicals and books during this century. Unscrupulous persons, therefore, come into the field with articles which are adaptations or abridgments, or even unaltered compositions of other writers, and succeed sometimes in imposing these upon editors, as no editor can be expected to have read everything. Possibly it is for this reason that many editors refuse even to examine MSS, submitted by persons unknown by them. English authors, again, find that the large importation of American literature is not in favour of their interests, many articles, long or short, being taken from that source to fill up the pages of British journals, not always with acknowledgment. the matter of piracy, however, transgressors are to be found on both sides of the Atlantic. As we can most of us see, to some extent this influx of American matter has not tended to elevate the public taste, but has fostered a liking for what is smart and scrappy, hence the popularity of a numerous body of weekly periodicals which have shot up like mushrooms these recent years, often as brief-lived.

Some of these, instead of closing their portals to the general run of authors, as do others to which we have reverted, and which have a large staff of contributors, invite all readers to send in, if they like, original or selected articles. This kind of open competition may appear promising, but in its result it is of no benefit even to amateurs, still less to professional authors. Of the contributions sent in each week one is generally selected and paid for, some of the others put by for after insertion, but not paid for, the bulk rejected, rightly enough perhaps. Amongst the trials which young authors have to encounter is that occasioned by the fact that many periodicals have two editors. In consequence of this it sometimes happens that one editor accepts an article conditionally, and a little while after the author is informed that it has been rejected by the other. I regret also to say that it is the practice of at least some editors to take hints from papers submitted to them and declined -a very unfair proceeding. Indeed, as an old stager remarked to one who was talking of devoting himself to literary pursuits, it is a calling which appears to promise much, but which has as many blanks and as few prizes as a German lottery.

THE ATALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

Subject for March—"Is the literature of the Victorian Era on the wane?" Papers not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before March 25th. The best paper on either side will be published in the magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Give the concluding scene of an imaginary novel. Give an estimate of the character of *Imagen*. Write 20 lines of rhymed verse in the measure of "Tis the voice of the sluggard." (Members can only enter for one of these subjects. Papers not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before March 25th.)

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (FEBRUARY).

I.

1. Montgomery. 2. Robert Burns.

11.

1. John Keats. 2. Ode to a Nightingale. Keats.

III.

1. Gilbert West. 2. Thomas Sprat. 3. Garth.

IV.

t. A noble Venetian, born in 1408, and real author of a "Treatise of Temperance and Sobriety," translated into

English by George Herbert, 2. The mother of George Herbert, afterwards Lady Danvers.

V

Eliza Cook: Melaia.
 King Duncan in Macbeth.
 Queen in Hamlet.

VI

1. Fra Urbano Valeriano Bolzanio of Belluno. 2. Pius II. (Alneas Sylvius).

VII.

Spenser. He was promised £100 by Queen Elizabeth for the reading of the Faery Queen, but not receiving it, presented her with these absurd lines.

SEARCH QUESTIONS (MARCH).

Ι.

Give authors of following quotations:-

1. "If she loves at last Her love's a re-adjustment of self-love, No more."

2. "They were parted then, at last?
Was it duty, or force, or fate?
Or only a wordy blast
Blew to the meeting gate?"

 "Her presence was low music; when she went She left behind a dreamy discontent, As sad as silence when a song is spent."

4. "She smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er he passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile?"

 "Do you wonder that my picture Has become so like a friend? It has seen my life's beginnings, It shall stay and cheer the end."

11.

1. To whom, more than any one else, is due the great revival and increasing study and appreciation of the sonnet in modern times?

2. Who wrote the sonnet called the "Birth of Speech "?

111

1. What poem is this quotation from?-

"O love, my love! If I no more should see Phyself, nor on the earth the shadow of thee, Nor image of thine eyes in any spring, How then should sound upon Life's darkening slope The ground-whirl of the perished leaves of Hope, The wind of Death's imperishable wing?"

2. Who wrote it?

IV.

1. Who was Agostino Nifo? What title was conferred upon him?

2. Who was Francesco Stabili, and what study did he devote himself to?

V.

Supply the last lines of these quotations :-

 "If I walk in Autumn's even While the dead leaves pass, If I look on Spring's soft heaven,—

Kiss me—oh, thy lips are cold; Round my neck thine arms enfold——"

Give author.

VI.

1. Where are these quotations from ?-

"Clearer loves sound other ways:
I miss my little human praise."

 "Oh, angel of the East, one, one gold look Across the waters to this twilight nook— The far, sad waters, angel, to this nook!"





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[H. HOFMANN, pinxt.



By MRS. HUNGERFORD,

Author of "Molly Bawn," "Phyllis," "The Hoyden," &c.

CHAPTER XXV.

"Love is not to be reason'd down."

I T is a sad, sad parting! yet in spite of that—and the wretched homeward walk and her tear-dimmed eyes—it is with a proud look that Madge marches into the library to face her father, and Mrs. Egerton, and Vincent.

"Where have you been?" demands the Squire, rising, and regarding her with angry eyes; it is indeed well after nine o'clock, and good time for a father to be angry.

"At the gate," a little defiantly.

"At the gate at this hour?" says the Squire, with growing indignation. "For what?"

Madge flings up her head.

"I went there because the night was fine, and I wanted to be alone; when I had been there for ten minutes or so, Victor Mowbray came—and—I stayed to talk to him."

"You met him by appointment," says the Squire. The girl's eyes blaze.

"John! take care!" says Mrs. Egerton.

"I am taking care!" The Squire flashes round a glance at her. "I am taking care of my own, of my poor sweetheart's children. Who is to care for them if I do not?" He turns back again to Madge, who is standing pale, frowning, waiting.

"You will give up this Victor Mowbray. Do you hear?"

"I shall not," says the girl, distinctly. Mrs. Egerton makes an imploring sign to her, but Madge is beyond seeing signs just now. "Never," says she, with a strange strength for one so young.

Here there is a little rustle in the room as of one moving uncertainly, and Madge suddenly finds Vincent's hand upon her arm.

"Wait, Madge-wait-" whispers she.

"You defy me then!" exclaims the Squire, furiously.

"So far." Madge's face is very white, and she presses her own hand with almost convulsive force on the gentle one upon her arm. "Father, I may not be able to marry Victor, but to give him up!—no! That is impossible. And——" Here, in spite of her heroic resolve to be calm, she bursts into a storm of tears. "Oh! can't I see him once again?" cries she.

"Certainly not-I--"

"Oh! come, Squire!" says Batty, who had entered the room a minute or two ago, and has taken in the situation. He would have gone on, but Vincent breaks in eagerly.

"He is going, you know, papa—going far away——"

"In a week, too," supplements Mrs. Egerton,

who seems to know more than most about it. As a fact, Colonel Eyre had told her that, and several other things, this morning.

"I must I will see him again!" sobs Madge, vehemently. "Auntie! help me!"

Poor Mrs. Egerton, thus appealed to before "the Grand Panjandrum himself," grows nervous and perplexed in the extreme. She looks anxiously round her, but help there is none.

"Perhaps to-morrow—your father——" stammers she, and like all people who try to sit on two stools, she comes to the ground.

"How dare you hint at such a thing, Henrietta," roars the Squire. "My mind is made up, I tell you. With my consent she shall never see him again."

"Oh! hang it all, Squire!" exclaims Batty, whose wrath has been gradually rising. "If a girl can't say good-bye to the fellow she—er—loves, when he is going off at a moment's notice to the Antipodes, the world must be a far more beastly place than I have yet believed it."

The Squire turns upon him angrily; his face flaming, his whole air annihilating. But before he can speak, Vincent has laid a hand upon his lips.

"Be good to her, papa—do! What Batty says is quite, quite true. Think how sad it must be for her. Papa, do be kind to her. At least, give her time—to think."

The Squire hesitates; but Vincent can always sway him.

"Oh! I'll give her time!" says he at last, frowning. "I'll give her till to-morrow to think it out."

"And you!" goes on Vincent, softly, "you will promise to think it out yourself, too—until tomorrow." To-morrow! she sighs heavily. What will to-morrow bring her? The chance of light—the chance of darkness, for ever. This recollection comes to the Squire, too.

"Oh there—there—I promise anything!" cries he, passionately. He puts her back hastily, but very, *very* tenderly from him, and dashes in an extraordinary temper from the room.

"Ah!" cries Vincent, faintly—she puts out her hand, and grasping a chair sinks into it.

"This has been too much for her," says Mrs. Egerton, hurriedly falling on her knees beside her. "Vincent, darling, you must not distress yourself!" she makes a slight, but sharp, movement to the other two, who at once move away carefully

through the doorway, Madge still weeping bitterly, if silently.

"You must keep quiet, my darling child. Think of to-morrow. Oh! why," miserably, "did they agitate you like this?"

"I am glad I knew," says Vincent, gently. "And I am thinking of to-morrow. When it is all over, if I recover, I shall speak to father again. He will not refuse me anything then; not even this about Madge. But," with a little shiver, "shall I recover, auntie?"

CHAPTER XXVI.

"Sadly thou gazest upon me; Sadly thine eyes meet mine; And down thy soft checks slowly Steal pearly drops of brine."

SHE does! The operation proves a complete success, and the great man who has come down from town to perform it, and the lesser light he brought with him in his train, are both unanimous in their opinion that Vincent's sight will be restored, not in all its entirety, perhaps, but with great care, and with some special glasses, she will certainly see as well as a great many people, who never dream that they cannot see as clearly as their neighbours.

Already now, when only four days have gone by, little tests have been used, and so far, all is satisfactory. Yes—in answer to Mr. Grace's nervous inquiry—in a fortnight or so the bandages may be removed from her eyes—just for a few minutes, to let her look on all around her. But there must be no haste, no hurry! The great man bows himself away, with a cheque in his pocket that runs into three figures!

One of the first things Vincent had done when she had come back to her senses, was to send for her father. And the Squire came trembling—speechless—and, kneeling beside her bed, scarcely daring to press the little pale hand held out so uncertainly to him, listened to her. The darkness of the room—the silence—the careful step of the nurse at the end of it, all made for his subjugation. He was awed, yet thankful to his heart's core, and but that tears were an unknown quantity to him since he lost his "sweetheart," he could hardly have kept from weeping aloud.

In this condition it was easy enough for Vincent to get from him any promise she might desire. "Papa, is that you?" the faint voice came from the darkened bed.

"It is—it is, my darling." The Squire's voice was broken.

"I want you to do something for me."

"Oh! anything, my poor little child." Almost she seemed to the Squire, at this moment, a baby of three years old again.

"You will let Madge say good-bye to Victor?"

Even at this supreme moment the Squire hesitated.

"Oh! you won't refuse me now—" cried Vincent, with a weak—a heartrending sob.

"No—no; anything—anything," cried the Squire. "It shall be as you wish. Lie still; compose yourself, my darling."

Thus the consent was gained; and Vincent, having obtained it, sank back on her pillow with a sigh of utter relief!

Madge she feared, she knew—and she did not blame her—would have made a way for herself to see Victor for the last time, though "faither an' mither an' a' should go mad!" But it gave the gentle Vincent great peace to know that she should see him with her father's knowledge. She knew, too, lying there prone upon her sad and darkened bed, that in spite of all Madge's wilfulness, it would afterwards be a great comfort to her.

* * * *

And now the day has come for that last sad farewell. Victor during the previous week has had several interviews with Mr. Stamer, and has made certain arrangements. The Castle must have a tenant found for it, of course; it is impossible to save the old place from going into alien hands, but Victor, with a stern air new to him, had laid a strict embargo on the lawyer. Rather than that it should go into Paul Swindon's possession, he would see it fall, stone by stone, to destruction. Mr. Stamer had nodded his head at that. It was sufficient answer, and enabled him to hold a discreet silence. Silence is golden! It seldom compromises one. But, in his heart, he knew he despised Paul Swindon almost as much as Victor did-and hated him even more.

To-day has dawned wet and chilly—the last day that Victor is likely to see for many years in the old home that has grown so dear to him. The only real home, indeed, that he has ever known. Sad at heart he has called up the servants to bid them a farewell that is likely to prove for ever. One by one, he says good-bye to them, giving to each a little present that can but badly be spared out of his slender resources. But not one has he forgotten.

Breaking at last with a choking in his throat from their sobbing words of grief and regret, he runs quickly downstairs to where Matt is still lying in his bed; better, certainly, and with the tempting prospect of "getting up" held out to him by the doctor, but very weak, and knowing too often those sad little relapses towards the old terrible insensibility out of which he has only just emerged.

He is quite conscious to-day, but yet it is with difficulty that Victor explains to him the fact that he is leaving him—that he is going away. Away, far beyond his reach, his touch. Victor is feeling a little nervous, knowing the almost passionate attachment that the lad has conceived for him; but slowly, slowly the truth reaches the tired brain. And then comes a touch of memory.

"But why, sir? Why are you going? This is your own house, anyway."

"Yes, yes," says Victor, very sadly. "But no money, Matt. No money, you see, to keep it up. A good old house, and a good old name—"
The poor boy himself breaks down a little here, and has to get up and tramp round the room a bit.
"You see that's why I'm going; to get the money—and you shall help me, Matt. I'll send for you, never fear. But I must go abroad to find that money; and not only for the old name's sake either. Not only for that, but for something—someone even dearer."

He pauses, and Madge's lovely, *loving* face rises before him. Oh! for her. To gain *her*; what heroic deeds may not be done.

"And see here, Matt," he goes on presently, much refreshed and encouraged by this mental glimpse of Madge. "It won't be for ever, my going, you know. I shall come back some day, and so shall you. But in the meantime, before you can join me, I have made matters all right with Mr. Stamer about you. A little sum of money, you know, to keep you going until I can send for you. And," tightening gentlyhis grasp on the thin, fever-wasted hand in his, "to help you to be straight, and as I would have you be, until we meet again, which," cheerily. "shan't be a long way off either. Though I do think, Matt, you'd keep straight for

my sake, and—the friendship between us, if I never left you a penny."

The sick boy lifts his head from the pillow—a great flush has suffused his face—his eyes are brilliant. He opens his dry lips as if to speak—to give voice to all the vehement gratitude that is in his heart, and—and something else, too, that persistently evades him, but the effort is beyond him. He sinks back miserably.

"Oh! if I could tell you-tell you," moans he, feebly.

"Nonsense, as if I didn't know," says Victor, hurriedly. "What an ass you are!" His tone is full of fear for the boy who now seems quite unstrung; after all, he is nearly as young as the stricken lad before him, and the old boyish phrases come back to him. "I'm not going so far, that you can't come to me, and——"

"But—" Matt has rallied from his late weakness. "Ilhy go, sir? when it's yours—all yours." He has not yet arrived at the thought that Victor is now "My lord." "The old gentleman he told me—he——" He lifts his hand to his head as if striving with his memory. "He said——" He pauses again hopelessly, having once more lost the thread of his argument. "There was that thing he showed me," he mumbles presently, almost inaudibly. "And besides, he said—said—after his death—I might——"

"Yes, yes, I know," says Victor, gently, seeking to calm him. No doubt the servants had told him he was to inherit everything. "He meant me to be his heir, I think, at one time, but, you see, he died before he had time to make his will—or else"—the cruel doubt rising within him again—"he changed his mind!"

"Dead! Is he dead?" cries Matt, violently. He makes an effort to sit up, and flings the bedelothes from him. There is something to be remembered now. Something that *must* be remembered; but still his memory plays him fatal tricks.

"Lie down, Matt!" Victor has thrown his arms round him, but the tussle to get him back into his bed again is severe. Matt is fighting with a certain scene in the past!

"No, sir, no! I saw it, I tell you. 'When I'm dead,' says he. I wrote on it—I—it's in——"

Suddenly his strength gives way, and he talls back almost insensible upon his pillow, his eyes enlarged and strained, as if trying to drag the secret that is lost from his dull brain.

Victor covers him up carefully again with the bedclothes, whispering comforting words to him the while, and renewing his promise to send for him. And, at last, seeing him quiet once more, and much blaming himself for exciting him at all, he presses Matt's limp hand in a warm clasp, and sick at heart, and heavy with grief, leaves him. The kind and good God only knew if he should ever see him again!

And now there is no time to spare! He sails to-morrow morning, and there is still that last, that saddest of all farewells to be said.

He goes with quick steps, but with a heart like lead, towards The Court.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"Yet, tottering as I am and weak, 8till have I left a little breath To seek within the jaws of death An entrance to that happy place, To seek the unforgotten face Once seen—once reft from me, Anigh the murmuring of the sea."

For full five minutes after he is gone, Matt lies motionless, as though dead, or sleeping. Then a little touch of memory comes to him, and he stirs, stretching out his arms wearily as if in search of something—something not to be replaced.

He is gone !—the young master—the only friend he has ever had.

This is the first, the overpowering thought; a crushing one, indeed! But after it comes another, almost as troublesome to the tired brain. Why must he go! There is something—something to prevent that, surely—but how—where?—and what was it the old lord had said?

Slowly his fevered brain centres itself, not so much on Victor as on the old man, and on that past afternoon when he had stood in the library, and had called to him—and——

A little wave of memory flings itself across the brain again, and out of it Matt comes triumphant—on the table *there* as it were—he stretches out his wasted hand towards the little table on which his medicine bottles lie. On that very table the paper lay; and——

He laughs feebly to himself at this great discovery, then grows worried again.

What was the paper—what was it? He wrote something on it, and the old man had stood—stood; on the hearth-rug was it? or near the wall?

Ha!

All at once full consciousness comes to him, and with it a strange, wild, return of strength. Emaciated, and only half alive, because of the virulent fever that has laid him low, still, the lad in a very ecstasy of delight, drags himself into a sitting posture.

The wall—the opening in it near the red roses! And the paper that he and Mason had signed! The will! It must have been the old lord's will leaving all to the young master. And it is hidden away there, where no one can find it, behind the red roses—and where no one knows of it, except himself—and he—he to be the one to find it!

Oh! now he *does* believe in Heaven! To him it has been granted the glorious task of restoring to the only man who has ever been kind to him—the thing he most desires.

He springs out of bed, and with feverish haste, and almost superhuman strength, huddles himself into some clothes.

The opening in the wall—the paper—the roses on the paper—all seem to dance before his eyes. But a mad excitement keeps him up. Ha! he will be the one to find that will—to give back everything to the young master. Dead! The old lord is dead. And when he was dead, he said that Matt might speak—but not before—or things might go bad with the young master. But now that is all over—the old lord is dead, and he—

He is out in the passage by this time, and is clambering] up the stairs, his breath coming faster and faster. Now it is beating hard against his side, and now he has come to the library, and has opened the door that leads to the northern wing of the house—and from that to the servants' quarters.

This door is already a little ajar—the same door through which the late Lord Mowbray had seen Victor talking to Matt—on his last visit to Braystown.

A big screen, now, as then, stands before the opening of the door, just inside the room, to keep out a perpetual draught from the lower regions, and Matt, entering with very little noise, stands still a moment behind it.

Surely there is someone here. His old and distinctly disgraceful instincts stand him in good stead

now. He comes to a sudden halt behind the screen, and peeps through the chinks of it.

All at once he grows as alert as a young terrier. His weakness disappears altogether, and the strength as of ten men enters into him. Who is that standing near the very wall he has come to see? A tall man with red hair, and a furtive manner and a glance that shifts nervously from right to left. Matt had never heard of Paul Swindon, but now he crouches back against the wall behind the screen, and falling on his knees, watches intently, through the openings in the joints, the proceedings of this distinctly suspicious, red-haired man.

The latter, as though he had heard Matt's light footsteps, glances cautiously, guiltily around him. Then, seeing nothing, moves nearer to the wall—nearer to the roses. He lifts his hand—presses it sharply on something—Matt cannot see on what—and lo! the same marvellous thing happens as in the old lord's time. A big square in the solid wall flies open, disclosing a little cupboard to the view.

Once again Matt grows cold with fright. Is this thing belonging to the supernatural, or is it— A moment later, however, and he has forgotten all about ghosts and supernatural agencies, and everything else save the interests of the one being who had taken him up and befriended him against all odds.

The man standing before the mysterious opening in the wall, after a hurried tumbling over of its contents, now draws out what is seemingly a long white envelope—and now he has torn it open, and dragged out a paper, and is running his eyes down it with frenzied haste. All at once it seems to Matt that that piece of paper is familiar to him. It was that he had signed. It was in that strange hiding-place the old lord had laid it when—

Coming to the edge of the screen and leaning forward, his eyes gleaming as much now with excitement as with fever, he stares at Paul Swindon.

Swindon, unconscious of those burning eyes, still reads rapidly; rapidly at first, and now more slowly, as his worst fears are confirmed. A letter from the late Lord Mowbray immediately before his death, had given him to understand that he would have nothing to gain by his will, and it was, therefore, to his most intense astonishment he learned on his uncle's decease that he was still the heir—that there was no later will than the one leaving all the

property to him. Later on a memory of that secret hiding-place in the wall of the old library had come to him, and with it a strange certainty that the last will of all lay there. Once on that day when Victor had come so unexpectedly upon him, in this very room, he had made an attempt to search for it and had been baffled. To-day, beyond all doubt, he knows Victor will be at The Court, and has chosen his chance of finding and destroying it, if, indeed, it be in existence. To-morrow Mr. Stamer will come down to lock up the rooms, and place caretakers in the old house, and the getting at the library may prove more difficult than it is now, when all the windows and doors lie hospitably open.

Yes—yes—here is the will that disinherits him, and gives all—all to Victor! Still staring at the fatal document, he draws a long breath. He had been right, then. He had guessed the whole truth of the case, even to the hiding-place of this precious paper. He had guessed—but he had not been actually sure, until now!

The paper rustles in his trembling fingers, the damp breaks out upon his brows. But presently comes comfort. He alone knows of it. It might have lain there, in that unsuspected cupboard, for ever, and none the wiser. It might still lie there for ever in its late resting-place! He makes a slight motion, as if to put it back again, then pauses. No! it is better to put it out of the way for good and all; no knowing what might occur to bring it to the light of day. Again he looks at it, and suddenly bursts into a subdued, malignant, uncontrollable burst of laughter. young idiot, with his insufferable airs, his contemptuous lips, his high-souled notions, his holding him, Paul Swindon, as one beneath contempt -and to think he is holding him now in the hollow of his hand! That it is in his power to make or mar him! Oh, the delicious revenge of it. It shall be "mar" to a certainty!

A light fire is burning on the hearth. He takes a step towards it, paper in hand. Ha! how gaily the flames burn—a second, and but a few ashes will remain—and the virtuous Victor will remain a pauper to the end of his days.

He laughs again in a low, detestable fashion, and bends downwards. He will burn it slowly, to give himself the full joy of his revenge. Letter by letter Victor's fortune shall disappear! Already

the leaping darts of fire have almost caught the

Great Heavens! what is that? With a mighty crash the screen has fallen to the floor, and on to Swindon's stooping shoulders something has flung itself. A deadly coward at heart, as are most bullies, Swindon makes but a poor resistance. This strange, gaunt foe, whose dark and sunken eyes seem to burn into his-whose coming is so unsuspected-whose grip round his neck is fierce enough to suggest madness-all these things tend to upset nerves already overstrung by dissipation of many sorts. He tries to rise-making futile efforts to dislodge those clinging fingers. Then he loses his last remnant of self-control. With an oath he drags himself backwards, stumbling over a footstool, and coming in contact with the corner of the table nearest him, falls with terrific force upon the carnet.

Matt falls with him, but recovers himself quickly, getting on his feet again, and, reeling to and fro in his weakness, he looks down. This man, whoever he is, is stunned, and the paper——

In a second Matt has clutched it—has dragged it from the senseless hand beneath him, and, turning, makes for the window, through which Swindon had come. The light evening mists seem to swim before his eyes; but love carries one triumphantly over most difficulties, and presently he finds himself outside the window and in the yard.

There, as good chance would have it, sits a groom in a dog-cart, ready to go—somewhere or other.

The where doesn't come into Matt's calculations. Staggering forward, his legs feeling very queer under him, and the precious paper clasped in his burning hand, he calls aloud to the groom, who is just mounting to his seat.

"Eh?" says the groom, staring at him, "can this be Matt! Why, he's in bed, anyway!"

Matt laid his hand upon the shaft of the cart as much to steady himself as to claim the groom's attention.

"To the Court, Bill," cries he, violently. "I must go to the Court at once."

"Ye're mad, man!" says Bill; who indeed has some reason for making this actionable remark.

"'Tis life or death, Bill," says Matt, clinging to the shaft with all his last strength. "'Tis for the young master." The groom, a young man lately engaged, looks nervously round him. Matt, as they all know, has been in a high fever until a day or two ago, and who is to say he has not "gone off is 'ead again'?

No other groom or stable-man nowhere is near,

"Bill," says Matt, "you've got to take me. 'Tis for him. If you love him, take me! I've got that here," raising, with shaking hand, the paper tightly clutched within it, "as'll give him back to us—and all as he ought to have—an'——"

He has clambered up into the cart now, and Bill, half believing and half disbelieving (yet longing to believe) in that paper that Matt holds, because of the soreness that is still in his heart on account of his late parting with his young lord, here gives in, and starts the mare suddenly at a sharp pace for The Court.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"I cannot speak, tears so obstruct my words
And choke me with unutterable joy."

At The Court at this moment, a very uncomfortable "at home" is being held; Madge, with eyes stained with tears, and with her whole air dejected in the extreme, is sitting in the large drawing-room, a few yards away from Victor, to whom she is supposed to be granting a last interview, by the gracious will of her father—(and indeed it needs must be a last interview)—with her father and all the other members of her family present, except, of course, Vincent.

The Squire had hedged with regard to his promise to Vincent. Madge should see her lover again, certainly, but only in his presence; and in fact he had so arranged it, that Victor's last farewell to Madge should take the innocent character of a farewell to the entire family.

Batty had refused, with some extraordinary language thrown in, to be present at this auto da fé, as he insisted on calling it, when first the monstrous proposition was laid before him; but afterwards, having thought it over, with help from Janet (who was, if possible, more indignant than he was), he had laid down his arms, and declared himself ready to assist at this modern form of torture.

Mrs. Egerton had done all she could to gain a private farewell for the poor lovers; she had indeed

said many things to the Squire, all distinctly uncomplimentary and very unpleasant, but he had refused to listen to her, and had proved harder than adamant.

* * * * *

"I think he might have given way just this once," says Janet, who, with Batty, is standing as far inside the curtains of the third window of the drawing-room as she can get, with a kind of hope, that is utterly futile, of letting Madge and Victor feel themselves alone! How can they feel alone, poor, sad, young creatures! with the Squire standing fuming on the hearthrug—evidently with his ears cocked to hear every word—and Mrs. Egerton, who is looking the picture of misery, pretending, with an air that would not have deceived a baby, to be interested in a long piece of knitting, meant for a comforter, and designed for the Deep Sea fishers. At this moment she feels much more in need of a comforter than even those toilers of the sea.

But the Squire had requisitioned her for this service, and she had felt herself compelled to obey him; and now his eye being on her, she sits mute, brooding angrily and with disgust on the task allotted her, whilst those two "poor children," as she calls them, try to say good-bye to each other by glances and hidden words flung broadcast, if nervously, through the conversation that is being carried on in a truly desultory fashion by the rest of the family.

Tragedy is in the air! Victor, half mad with grief and pain of parting, and Madge, "his other half," feeling as he does, have both decided by glances that are often so much more eloquent than words, that this bald, miserably cold parting thus forced upon them—this abominably impossible goodbye for two who love each other as they do, shall not be the scene of the last outpourings of their bursting hearts.

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"I think so, too," says Batty, with fine disgust.

"Oh, it's dreadful, dreadful," says Janet, with tears in her eyes. "If Vincent was only here, she would not let him do it. But, of course, she must not be disturbed in any way. I thought of speaking to her, of getting her to make father go farther than the bare promise he made her, of letting Madge and Victor see each other once again; but Madge herself would not hear of it. 'Vincent

should not be disturbed in any way,' she said, 'though we all died of it.' What could one do after that?"

"What, indeed," says Mr. O'Grady thoughtfully.
"It's a serious problem. I hope, however, we shan't die of it! What is 'it,' by the way? Anything catching? Sounds like an epidemic."

"Oh, you can make fun of things if you like," says Janet, with a reproachful glance at him. "You have no feeling. You'd smile, I really believe, if every friend you had was dead.

"You misjudge me," says Mr. O'Grady. "I shouldn't smile, for example, if Mrs. Deane-Burnes was dead."

"Mrs. Deane-Burnes," says Janet a little startled.

"Do you call her a friend of yours — why I thought ——" She stops as if trying to pierce some hidden thought, and then goes on with distinctly increased animosity. "No doubt she is—the way you speak to her, and make much of her, and talk to her horrid girls!" Immense stress upon the "horrid." "I should say you did!"

"Well," says Batty calmly, who has suffered much at times from Mrs. Deane-Burnes' advances on the part of her "girls," "I shouldn't smile if she were dead——" He pauses, to make more significant his coming words.

"Oh, go on," says Janet, irritably. "If you wouldn't smile, what would you do?"

"I'd laugh!" says Batty solemnly.

Now this seems a distinctly unchristian thing to say, yet it does not seem to offend Janet half as much as some of his milder remarks—in fact, she smothers a faint little giggle as he comes to the end of it. After all, he doesn't think so very much of those "horrid" girls!

"But we are wandering away from Madge," says she in a moment or two, with deep compunction. "Papa has been awful about her and Victor ever since Lord Mowbray's death. There was one day —you remember it, Batty? last Tuesday, wasn't it? He—I felt so frightened that I thought my head wasn't quite steady on my shoulders."

"Was that the first time you thought that?" asks Batty, with an apparent thirst for knowledge.

"It was," says she, not noticing the impertinence. "It seemed to rise from my shoulders and float away into the blue up there," pointing to the blue sky.

"It came back?" Mr. O'Grady's thirst now seems to have grown to passion point.

"Oh, yes," laughing—and, indeed, openly flattered by his apparent anxiety. "It came back quite safely, and is now "—laughing again, "glued on to my neck once more."

"Such a blessing!" a sigh of pious relief escapes him; a moment later, however, he pauses and regards her with sudden fear, "Glue melts," says he

"Oh, if you are going in for one of your stupid jokes," says Janet, preparing to march, but Batty catching the skirt of her dress, hauls her back again into position.

"There isn't time for a fight now," says he. "We've got to think of Madge."

"Oh, true!" giving in at once, as she thinks of her sister's trouble. "Batty, do try and find a way out of this for her if you can. Poor darling old Madge, I can't bear to see her so unhappy."

Her eyes fill with tears, and Batty instantly grows serious.

"I have thought of one," says this master of resource. "But if I give you the tip, you won't betray me?"

"Oh, Batty!"

"A mere question," says he. "Pray pass it over. I merely meant that if you *did* betray me, I should slay you—dead or alive."

"Would you, indeed?" says Janet, to whom a quarrel is always welcome. "You make a mistake there, I can tell you! It is I who should slay you in all probability, for I'm just as strong as ever you were! And as for your plan," angrily, "I don't believe in it. You can take it away. I don't believe in anything you do. No, I don't. And goodness help Madge, say I, if she's got to depend on you."

"All right," says Mr. O'Grady, "I'll carry my invention elsewhere."

"Invention, indeed."

"Ay, madam! And a most excellent one! But it is the fate of genius throughout all ages to be misunderstood. Tubal Cain himself, I believe, was drummed out of court to the music of one of his own inventions! We all have our maligners. I'm content," sadly, "to tread in the footsteps of the great ones who have gone before me—to run in their splendid groove. But when you find your sister lying in the slough of despond, you will

perhaps be sorry then for the hour in which you dismissed your humble servant."

He takes a step forward.

"I certainly shan't be sorry for *that*," says Janet, with dignity. "But—if you *can* do anything for Madge—No, no—*Do* come back, Batty——" as he almost vanished through the curtains.

He lets his face appear again, but no other part of him—evidently his legs are bent on going.

"Oh! what a wretch you are!" says she, indignantly.

At this even his face goes; and it is not until Janet has started after him, and caught his coattails, and so dragged him back again into the shelter of the window, that she discovers he had never really meant to go at all.

"Just to try you," says he. "I knew you couldn't get on without me! Well, look here; will you listen to my plan, or will you not?"

"Oh! I'll listen," says she, the more scornfully because of her late defeat.

"It's this then. Let us all, when Victor says good-bye to her, propose to escort him to the gate. The Squire will never run to that, but he will believe Madge to be all right if we go with her. There's 'safety in a multitude,' you know, as the old saying has it, though I'm not so sure about that myself. Well, when half-way to the gate, you, and I, and the others, we can always depend on Mrs. Egerton, will shoot down one of the nearest pathways, and so leave the poor things to say good-bye to each other with all the melancholy in the world. There's nothing half so sweet as melancholy, you know—"

"What a good thought!" says Janet. "Really—for you—it is a most sensible one." She is feeling, indeed, somewhat impressed by this arrangement of his.

"Poor me! Didn't you know I was the proverbial rock? But honestly, Janet, I am sorry for them. It does seem real hard lines that they can't say good-bye to each other comfortably."

"It does, it does," with a sigh, "I do think papa—is—well—is——"

She hesitates as if for a word.

Mr. O'Grady generously supplies it. "A regular old hunks," says he, briefly, but beautifully.

"Batty!" she turns upon him with indignation.
"How dare you use such a word! I will thank

you to remember that the person you—you thus misname is my father!"

"I know it, my poor dear girl," says he with the deepest, the most sincere sympathy. "Would it were otherwise. Do you think I don't feel for you? Why I——"

There is no chance of knowing now the tremendous answer Janet has prepared for him—a little movement in the group outside checking it, as it lies upon her lips.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"All desp'rate hazards courage do create, As he plays frankly who has least estate; Presence of mind, and courage in distress, Are more than armies to procure success."

The last moment has come for the unhappy lovers. Victor had waited—hoping from minute to minute that the Squire would relent, would make some excuse for leaving him alone with Madge, for the sad farewell that is now so near. But the Squire stood firmly to his guns; he knew no relenting. Planted on the hearthrug, slapping his legs with frowning impatience with the little riding-whip in his hand, he persuades himself in his narrow soul that he is doing all he can for his dead sweetheart and her eldest girl, by refusing to let her pledge herself still further to this penniless boy. If only poor Madge's mother had been alive to-day, she could have taught him, perhaps, a better and truer wisdom

But, alas for the lovers! she is dead, and Victor, rising, with grief strongly mingled with rage in his heart, is standing bidding good-bye to Mrs. Egerton, whose kindly heart is aching for him. His own heart seems on fire with the injustice of the whole thing. Why had he consented to this arrangement—why had he not urged Madge to resist her father's authority, and meet him once again—only once again—alone—before he left her, as it might well be for ever?

Mrs. Egerton presses his hands warmly. She would have dearly liked to kiss him, but the Squire's presence numbs her, and a choking sensation in her throat prevents her from speaking. But Victor understands, and something in her kindly, if silent, sympathy, but much more in the glance he catches of Madge's face, white, cold, miserable, wakes in his breast a sudden wild resolve.

Dropping Mrs. Egerton's hand, he walks straight up to the Squire.

"Mr. Grace," says he, and his tone is not so much conciliatory—as perhaps it ought to have been, if he hoped to win his cause—as cold and stern, "Cannot I say good-bye to Madge alone!"

"I think not," says the Squire, twitching his brows. "Better not. No good to be gained by it."

"So much good at least!—that we should remember our parting with less bitterness."

"And with greater constancy! I am sorry, Victor, that I must refuse this last request."

"Not my last one," says the young man, restraining his passionate revolt against this cruelty with great difficulty. "I have still one more thing to ask of you. You will give your consent to our engagement?"

"A very ill-timed remark," says the Squire, fuming. "An engagement between you and my daughter! No! and I hardly think it a manly thing of you, sir, under the circumstances to ask this of me! I have known you for many years, Victor, and your late uncle was a friend of mine; so that I would, if possible, accede to any reasonable request of yours; but this is not reasonable. However, not to seem too hard, I will make one concession. You have written to me, saying it is probable that in some foreign land you will be able to make your fortune. Well, should my daughter not receive a suitable proposal until you have made that fortune, I shall then willingly give her to you."

It is a ridiculous concession, as all who hear know very well. Pretty Madge, with a handsome fortune at her back, to be left long without that "suitable proposal" is a preposterous idea; and one can well understand what pressure would be brought to bear upon her, when the rich suitor threw the handkerchief. Batty, always impulsive, and not in the least afraid of the Squire (a fact that, perhaps, has been the principal lever in the Squire's undoubted liking for him), starts forward from between the curtains to put in a scathing denunciation of this last act of his; but a little gesture from Madge stays him.

She, nerved, calm, yet white to the lips, has stepped forward. She does not look at her father, or at any one but Victor—to him she speaks.

"Though every man in the world should ask me to marry him, Victor, I should say 'no' to all; I shall wait for you, for ever!"

"Madge! you forget yourself," cries her father, furiously.

"Perhaps," says she. "I shall, at all events, never forget Victor!"

"Oh! Madge!" cries the young man in low but passionate tones. He takes a step towards her—holding out his hands, and then, all in a moment, the poor child's enforced calm gives way, and with a bitter cry, she flings herself into his arms.

The Squire, with a fierce ejaculation, strides forward; already, his hand is on Madge's shoulder—already Victor's arm is raised to fling him back—when suddenly the door is burst violently open, and some one stumbles, rather than rushes, into the room.

A tall, gaunt, half-dying creature, with blazing eyes, that look out with strange inconsistency from a face that already seems grey with the approach of death.

For a moment he stands upright, clutching at the door for support, and looking wildly round him, as if in search of something.

"Matt!" cries Victor, horrified. The lad's eyes turn to him, and letting go the door, he bursts into a loud laugh—the laugh of delirium.

"I 'ave it 'cre," he cries, lifting his hand and waving in the air a paper tightly clasped within it. 'Tis all yer own!—all yer own!—I told you 'twas! All! All!——And the devil's dead, sir—I've killed him!—Come home, master—come home! 'Tis all—all—"

He makes a desperate rush forward to where Victor is standing, too astonished to move—and falls headlong in a crumpled heap at his feet.

In a second Victor is on his knees beside him, with Mrs. Egerton and Madge; Batty has run to the dining-room for some brandy.

"He seemed so well when I left him," Victor is saying anxiously, whilst lifting him into a more comfortable position. "Weak, of course, but on the mend. What on earth can have happened since?"

Matt had fallen with the hand that held the paper under him, and it is only now, when they tenderly pull out his arm, and raise his head on cushions, that they can see he is holding something in his clenched hand.

"What is that in his hand?" demands the Squire, who, as a magistrate, feels he ought to look into this business.

"I don't know," says Victor. "Something that has evidently upset him. Poor fellow, I'm afraid he was worse than I thought him. But how did he get here? In the state I left him, I don't believe he could have walked a yard to saye his life."

"He has apparently walked many," says Mr. Grace in his most official tone. "I think it better to see what this paper contains."

Stooping, he loosens the nerveless fingers, takes the paper from them, and, going to the window, smoothes it out, and begins, in a rather bored and careless fashion, to run his eye over it.

Two minutes later, however, an exclamation breaks from him.

"Good heavens!" says he; and then again, "Can this be possible!"

The others are all attending to poor Matt, who seems quite exhausted; but now that he is on a sofa, and has had a few drops of brandy poured down his throat, shows some signs of reviving. Victor in his anxiety about him has shown no interest in the paper, or indeed felt any—the real value of it being utterly unknown to him. Seeing Matt at last conscious, he springs to his feet.

"I must go!" cries he, with an agonized glance at Madge. And then to Mrs. Egerton, "You will see to him, poor, *poor* fellow; I have promised to send for him later on, but a kind friend *now*!——"

"You may trust me," says Mrs. Egerton. "You," very gently and tenderly, and with a glance at Madge, "may trust us both to look after him."

"I know it," says Victor in a choking tone. "Good-bye, again, Mrs. Egerton—good——"

"Stay, Victor," calls the Squire in a loud tone. "It seems to me, looking at *this*," tapping the paper, "that there may be a reason for your not going just at present—perhaps"—ponderously— "for your not going at all!"

He pauses. In his soul he is covered with confusion; and it is little to say that he would have given a good slice out of his income to call back all the unpleasant things he had said to Victor during the few minutes that preceded the somewhat tragic entry of poor Matt.

"What?" says Victor slowly, and as if not understanding; indeed, how can he understand?

"This may be a fraud, of course," says the Squire, pointing to the paper. "But if it is not, it makes you sole heir to all your uncle's, the late Lord Mowbray's, possessions, both in money and land."

There is a dead silence. It is broken at last by the most unlikely person present. Matt, weak and spent though he is, lifts himself up on his elbow.

"True for you, governor," says he, with a queer little chuckle. "That wot you got in your 'and—that's the ticket!"

Victor stands as if stunned. This thing—oh, it is impossible. It can't be true. Why, his passage is taken, he is going abroad to—to make that fortune that is to give him Madge. He can't get beyond that, because some words are most foolishly echoing and re-echoing in his brain. "All your own—all."—that was Matt's voice surely, and then—"Sole heir."

A hand laid lightly on his shoulder rouses him. It is Janet's.

"I think Madge is frightened," says she, nervously. And, indeed, Madge, who has just stood up from Matt's sofa, is looking terribly pale, her eyes large with tears. Quickly he goes to her.

"My darling," he whispers, "if this should be true! What would it not mean to us. But I can't help doubting it. Don't believe in it, Madge."

"Perhaps," says the Squire, coming up to the sofa where Matt is lying, exhausted, but happy, "you will be able to explain how you came by this —er—remarkable document."

Matt in a few hurried words tells of his late encounter with Swindon (whom he still persists in calling the devil). But the Squire, who feels himself in a distinctly false position, and who, with a view to keeping up his dignity, is determined not to give in as long as he can with any decency hold out—still dallies with the paper, and hums and haws a bit, with a truly magisterial air.

"A strange story," says he. "Of course, coming from any one else, one would be likely to place some faith in it; but this fellow's antecedents are

"I won't have a word said against his antecedents," says Victor, quickly. He faces the Squire, who tries hard to look him down, but fails. "Not one. Of his past we know nothing—except by hearsay. Of his present we know everything—and it all redounds to his credit."

"Quite so, quite so," says the Squire, backing water smartly. "Well then, supposing this story to be true, and that this paper"—glancing at it again—"is the last will of your late uncle, I should say——"

"But, sir-" breaks in Victor, impatiently.

"Permit me to finish," says the Squire, loftily.

"Permit me, however, to say first," says Victor,

firmly, "that I think that paper in your hand belongs to me, not to you."

There is an instant's awful pause. Victor to thus beard the Squire. The latter glares at him.

"Yours! How am I to know this is not some nefarious document trumped up by that precious protégé of yours? As a magistrate, sir, I——"

Here Batty, who has been standing by the Squire's side reading the will with him, gives him a little hint.

"The writing, Squire," suggests he, in a low tone, pointing to the paper. "It is the late Lord Mowbray's or nobody's."

"It may be," says the Squire, squinting at it through his glasses. "And, indeed, now that you mention it, it seems to bear an extraordinary likeness to the writing of my late friend. If you insist on it," looking up at Victor, "I shall surrender this document to you, but the responsibility of my so doing must rest with you. It may or may not be the last will and testament of your uncle; for my own part I have doubts. But it—"

Here Mr. O'Grady's patience reaches its utmost limit. He gives the Squire a most undisguised shove.

"Nonsense, Squire! You know as well as I do that it's all right! Don't make a fool of your-

self," breathes he, in what he fondly believes to be a zephyr-like whisper, but which is perfectly audible to all in the room—thus reducing the Squire's grandiloquence to considerably less than nothing.

The Squire turns angrily upon him.

"What do you mean, sir? Who could be sure of the genuineness of a paper thus thrust upon him. Of course I hope, as all must hope, that this will is the last, the real one. But to accept it finally, until the truth is beyond all doubt, would be but the mere folly of an unthinking being. If," turning to Victor, "if, my dear Lord Mowbray—" A sensational thrill runs through all present. It is the first time he has ever accosted Victor by his title. "If this paper should give you what I for one decidedly consider should be your rights, I—believe me—shall be the first to congratulate you."

Such a change of front! Janet flings up her pretty chin, and looks contemptuous—youth being always specially hard on any lapse from the broad path of virtue—and Mrs. Egerton tells herself she shall never again be afraid of the Squire even if she has to live with him for a thousand years. But perhaps after all she won't have to put in so much time with the Squire. There may be some one else—who—

Madge stands motionless and very white; but Victor cannot restrain the smile that widens his lips.

"I accept your congratulations, Mr. Grace," says he, courteously; "but may I hope you will congratulate me on something else far better—my engagement to your daughter!"

(To be continued.)





By EDWIN OLIVER.

HE weird magic which gave to the withered frame of the aged Faust the swift blood of reckless youth worked no greater marvel than have the hands of the modern mason on this small strip of river side. We are justly proud of our great boulevard which flanks the Thames from Charing Cross to Blackfriars, but it is the glory of the present, the triumph of to-day. Here history is mute: no crumbling towers, no battered bastions lead the mind back through the glowing past. Its gayest scene is a City pageant, its saddest tale an outcast's bed. Yet no spot from John-o'-Groats to Penzance can tell so goodly a tale. Shut out for a moment the shriek of river steamer and the long line of new hotels, and the courtly Chaucer shall once more tell how here he wooed and won his Philippa. How

"... on the morrow,
When every thought and every sorrow
Dislodg'd was out of mine heart,
With every woe and every smart,
Unto a tent prince and princess
Methought brought me and my mistress,"

Here again shall the great Protector overshadow the sickly life of the boy king, and the poor Lady Jane embark on her last journey to Traitor's Gate. Gone are the stately palaces with their lawns and gardens sloping down to the water's edge—gone are the gay barges with their loads of careless courtiers and brilliant dames, and the merry watermen with their humbler crafts, forerunners of our modern 'bus; yet let us pause beside the low wall above the rushing tide and watch gallant "Steenie" pass down the old water stair of York House, while the quaint strains from the timber shed of "The Folly," anchored in mid-stream, tell of how "the quality" made merry in the good old days. May we not echo Gay's lament?—

"Here Arundel's famed structure reared its frame— The street alone retains an empty name.

There Essex's stately pile adorned the shore; There Cecil's, Bedford's, Villiers'—now no more."

The first of these noble homes outside the grim portals of Temple Bar was Exeter, afterwards



Essex, House. Edward II. presented it to the See of Excter, placing Bishop Stapleton in it as first tenant. This dignitary stoutly supported his patron in the royal matrimonial feud which was disturbing the nation. When all the rest of his party had found a hurried trip to Wales desirable, he still upheld the unpopular cause of the King in the Metropolis. But the mob were for Isabella and showed their zeal by beheading the good Bishop as he was seeking the sanctuary of St. Paul's; they then marched on Exeter House, burnt the gates and all the rich possessions which the dead prelate had accumulated. The new building which rose upon this wreck became the residence of the unlucky line of Howard, who journeyed thence with monotonous regularity to the Tower. From the Norfolks it was handed on to the gipsy Earl of Leicester, as the "Sweet Robin" of Queen Bess was styled in reference to his dark-hued face. After committing every possible villainy, he had the unmerited good fortune to die of fever, and bequeathed Leicester Place to his step-son. Devereux, Earl of Essex, who also usurped his place in the fancy of the frolicsome Queen. It was of Essex House, as it was now styled, that Spenser wrote:

"Near to the Temple stands a stately place, Where I gayned giftes and the goodly grace Of that great lord who there was wont to dwell, Whose want too well now feels my friendless case; But, ah! here fits not well Old woes."

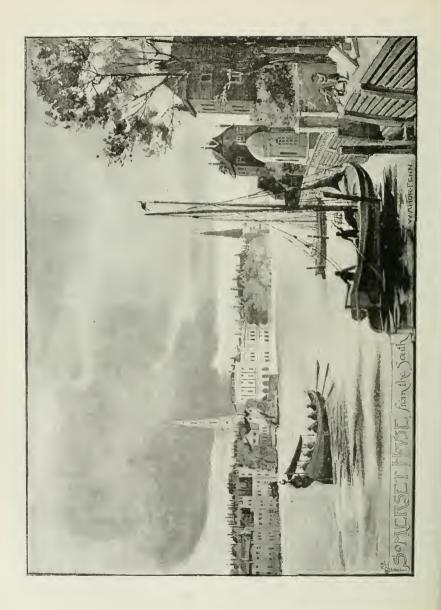
It was the scene of the favourite's downfall. Here he sulked when his royal mistress had curbed his violence with a box on the ear; and here he returned from that "cursedest of all islands" after the abject failure of his Irish mission. His was a nature which could not brook neglect; banishment from Court frenzied him, and drove him to one of the most puerile revolts on record. The plot included a treaty with the King of Scotland, the seizure of the royal palace and the intimidation of the Queen by a handful of crack-brained followers. But his impatience would not allow of



time for even this burlesque to hatch; disobeying a summons to appear before the Council, Essex called his adherents together, locked up the Lord Keeper and his escort, who had come to the house to learn the meaning of the disturbance, and, followed by two hundred gentlemen, tore madly to the City. Although he was admitted through the gates of Temple Bar, he found the citizens little inclined to support him; while Burleigh's offer of a thousand pounds for his apprehension as a traitor, caused the burghers to cut off his retreat at Ludgate. He broke through the barricade, with the loss of some lives, and finally reached Essex gardens by boat, only to find that his minion, Sir Ferdinand Gorges, had gone over to the enemy and released his prisoners. There was no course now left for the Earl but to convert his home into a stronghold, and die like a rat in a hole. With him was Shakespeare's idol and patron, the young Earl of Southampton; the two, from the roof of the building, endeavoured to make terms with Sir Robert Sidney, whose troops had surrounded the walls. These were declined, and the more cogent appeal of battering-rams, hastily brought from the Tower, finally induced the noble rebels to surrender at discretion. The fascination which attaches to

the personality of Essex has thrown a halo of martyrdom around his life, yet, according to the laws of the time, perhaps no man ever more thoroughly merited his fate; his trial is interesting for the strong emphasis it gives to the mean spirit and craven ingratitude of philosopher Bacon.

It was in the neighbouring palace of Arundel that the Countess of Nottingham died-she who figures to such disadvantage in the improbable story of Elizabeth and Essex' ring. The story is to the effect that the young earl flung a ring from the window of his condemned cell in the Tower to a passing lad, commissioning him to take it to the Countess's sister, Lady Scrope, with a request that she would bring it before the Queen, who was supposed to be yearning to fulfil her promise of pardon whenever the gem should be sent to her. My lord of Nottingham, either misunderstanding the request or from motives of malice, refused to allow his wife to part with the ring, and so the noble head was duly lopped off. When the hand of death quickened her dormant conscience, the Countess sent for her royal mistress, confessed the pitiable secret, and craved her pardon. But Elizabeth, with a burst of Tudor fury, shook the remaining life out of the moribund dame, declaring,



"God may forgive you, but I never can!" From that moment the Queen pined, and died of remorse a fortnight later. Now, seeing that her death was due to a prolonged and clearly-defined complaint, and that she was never known to express contrition for Essex' death, we may dismiss the ring fable with the sceptical remark that Betsy Prig applied to the mythical Mrs. Harris.

Arundel House was forcibly stolen from the bishops of Bath by that notorious scoundrel, Admiral Lord Thomas Seymour. He married Catherine Parr, widow of Henry VIII., and has been accredited with the crime of having poisoned her. On her death he sought the hand of the young Princess Elizabeth, who is said to have blushed whenever his name was mentioned; and was finally beheaded by his brother, the Protector, whose reign at Somerset House we shall presently touch

upon. The Admiral's house is described by the great Duc de Sully, during his sojourn there, as being fine and commodious, yet the pictures of it present a low, rambling group of buildings quite devoid of design or beauty; but the unrivalled view it possessed of river life, with Westminster in the distance, compensated for other blemishes. It was purchased by the Howards when they occupied the adjoining palace; under Thomas of that line, to whom James I. restored the Earldom of Arundel, it became one of the most magnificent repositories of art in the kingdom, "My noble friend," as Evelyn styles this peer, stored the great building with the most priceless treasures of sculpture and painting that his emissaries could purchase in Italy and the East. During the Commonwealth all this splendour was destroyed. The Earl's grandson, Mr. Henry Howard, who received the remains



at the Restoration, found the Arundel Gardens strewn with mildewed antiquities on which the elements for twelve years had worked their will. The marbles and statues were presented to the University of Oxford, and the superb library to the Royal Society. In 1678 the house went the way of its compeers and was replaced by the steep, narrow streets, called after its owners—Arundel, Surrey, Howard, and Norfolk.

In dealing with old Somerset House it is difficult to substitute statecraft for Inland Revenue, and the pounds a day was spent on building expenses, the total outlay up to the time of the duke's death being fifty thousand pounds of our present money. The genius of John of Padua, architect to Henry VIII., was employed in designing the building. The long battlemented walls shut off the river from the trim, formal gardens, and the noble arcaded front of the main building looked pleasantly over the lawns and straight avenues of trees. But the very display only served to strengthen the hands of his enemies; the great Protector was dragged from his pedestal



Protector for the Official Registrar. It was here that the proud uncle of Edward VI., during his regency, erected a palace which should eclipse the magnificence of Wolsey at Hampton Court, or the royal state of Whitehall. Churches and bishops' houses were ruthlessly demolished to make space for the mammoth structure; St. Margaret's, Westminster, and St. John of Jerusalem, Smithfield, were torn down to supply stones for the walls, until his masons were driven from their acts of desecration by the scandalised mob. One hundred

a residence for his equally foolish Queen, re-christening it in her honour Denmark House; here its merry mistress kept up a perpetual fite, delighting her sycophants by appearing with her maids of honour in the masques of "Rare Ben Jonson." In the next reign it was also a royal residence; Henrietta Maria maintaining her profligate French Court here. Such a pest did these arrogant, vicious aliens become that the King himself wearied of them, and ordered their dismissal back to France. It cost poor Charles £50,000 to discharge the pre-

posterous claims they made upon him, and even then they had to be forcibly ejected. The following letter to Buckingham expresses the exasperation of the monarch:—

"Steenie,—I have received your letter by Dick Graeme. This is my answer. I command you to

send all the French away to-morrow out of the town, if you can by fair means (but stick not long in disputing), otherways force them away - drive them away like so many wild beasts, until ye have shipped them; and the devil go with them. Let me hear no answer. but of the performance of my command. So I rest,-Your faithful, constant, loving friend.

" C. R."

Pepys tells some quaint stories of the

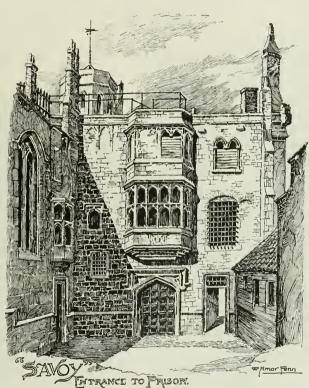
life here during the Queen-mother's residence. The first English words which he heard her use were in a humourous passage of arms with the King, when the young wife said to him: "You lie!" and Charles, in return, endeavoured to make her say: "Confess, and be hanged."

At Somerset House the body of Cromwell lay in state for some days on a crimson velvet bed, wrapped in a velvet pall, with a crown upon his head and a sceptre in his hand. Again, when her son regained his rights, Henrietta dwelt there until the stronger attractions of the French Court drew her from her foster-land; then she bequeathed the house to her yet more unhappy successor, Catherine of Braganza, who had ample leisure for reflection upon the "merry" ways of her husband

After that, the building deteriorated into a lodging for foreign potentates and decayed noblemen and gentry. In 1775 the old palace was removed to make way for new Government offices, built from designs of Sir William Chambers.

The story of the old Savoy Palace is brief, but illustrious, glorified by two such mighty shades as Simon de Montford and "time-hor-oured" Lancaster. The dim, silent streets and

peaceful graveyard tell little of the waves of passion and conflict which have swept over the precincts. It was from the Savoy that Simon dictated terms to his royal master, and framed the liberties of our national constitution; but it was under John of Gaunt, son, uncle, and father of three English kings, and patron of Chaucer, that its lustre shone most fiercely. The great cruciform building combined the qualities of the fortress and the palace. When





over four centuries later, the ruins were removed to make way for the growing limbs of the great city, the old moss-covered walls defied the force of screwjack and crowbar, and only yielded when the foundations were undermined: yet the old chronicler, Holinshed, tells us, with all its rugged

strength, it upon the H had no rival in, the port

throughout the length

and breadth

of the land

in beauty

and stateli-

ness, or in

the splendour of its decorations. It was his thirst for fresh spoils wherewith to maintain his regal state that brought the Duke into his strange alliance with the genius of Wyclif. No two more opposite motives could have actuated them in their co-operation against a common enemy—a corrupt Church; the aim of Lancaster was robbery undisguised; that of the scholar, reform and purification. Yet the protection of the baronage was as necessary to the one as the fiery invectives of the preacher to the other; and John was no half-

hearted supporter. When Wyclif was cited to appear before the Bishop of London, and was refused a seat, the arrogant Duke threatened the prelate that, "rather than take such language from him, he would drag him out of the church by the hair of his head." For this sacrilegious remark he

was pelted by the populace with mud, an act which so infuriated him that he at once demanded of Parliament the repeal of all city privileges. Th's nearly cost the Prince his life. The citizens rose in arms, and swept down upon the Savoy, pillaging and sacking the palace from cellar to roof, its master narrowly escaping in an open boat to Kingston.

The greedy ostentation of John again made the Savoy the object of popular fury, when the great peasant revolt, known as Wat Tyler's rebellion, broke for a time the power of Feudalism. An infamous Poll-tax fanned the discontent into a blaze; in a few days London was at the mercy of a hundred thousand men, armed with bill and bow, who seized the Tower, beheaded the Archbishop and his minions, and gutted the Palaces of Lambeth and the Marshalsea. Then their vengeance fell

upon the House of Gaunt: the doors were battered in, the porters killed, and the superb pile given over to the flames. The gorgeous hangings were torn to shreds, the massive plate of silver and gold flung into the river. Yet, with all this madness, the aim of the mob was just. They asked for freedom, not for loot; and the law of Tyler, that any theft was punishable by death, was rigidly carried out. One poor wretch, who was seen to slip a silver goblet into his vest, was immediately flung into the fire. The great hall was destroyed by the explosion of some barrels, which were treated in the same fashion under the delusion that they contained money. They left but a sorry ruin behind them; and so it remained during the dark century which followed-a grim lesson to the greed for power which was starving the land.

Another name which is indelibly inscribed on this landmark of history is that of the quixotic king, John of France. When the glory of his realm seemed for ever crushed by the power of the Black Prince, he was brought to London more as an honoured guest than as a prisoner of war. The conqueror himself vied with his father in the obsequious honour they paid to the fallen man; London welcomed him with triumphal arch and waving banner; a royal banquet awaited him at Westminster, where Edward rose to embrace him as a brother. A pleasing instance of chivalry is the voluntary return of John to the Savoy, to atone for the dishonoured flight of his son, who was also

the hospital in the reign of Queen Anne, the building was used as a barrack and military prison, until it was removed to form a way to Waterloo Bridge.

Of the three remaining houses of Durham, Salisbury, and York, which lay between the Savoy and Charing Cross, the first has, perhaps, the most brilliant record. It has seen some of the wild carousals which Prince Hal held with his questionable friends; it entertained the mangled heroes of the six days' joust, which celebrated the espousal



a prisoner on parole. When dissuaded from this course by his advisers, the French king replied: "If honour were banished from every other place, it should at least find an asylum in the breast of kings."

During the Tudor dynasty, the Savoy rapidly deteriorated from an almshouse to a refuge for thieves and beggars, and finally a sanctuary for fraudulent debtors. In 1696 a creditor who was rash enough to try to enforce a debt, for his temerity was tarred and feathered by the lawless tenants, then driven in a wheelbarrow to the Strand, and bound to the Maypole. After the suppression of

or Henry VIII. with the "Flemish mare"; it witnessed the persecutions of Princess Elizabeth by the butcher, Bonner, and the virgin queen bestowed it later on her favourite, Raleigh, with the offices of Captain of the Guard, Lieutenant of Cornwall, and Lord Warden of the Stannaries. Here the historic first pipe caused such consternation in the mind of the astounded flunkey. In the gloom of the preceding reign, Durham House was the scene of the marriage of the unhappy Lady Jane Grey, and of her last journey to the Tower. The Adelphi marks the site of Durham House.

Old Salisbury House is principally associated with the misanthropical hunchback, Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, who hunted down Raleigh and inspired Bacon's Essay on Deformity. His chief characteristics were spleen, avarice, and a love of profuse luxury. The wealth squandered on the adornment of his town house was hardly eclipsed by the splendours of Hatfield Chase. It was this minister who dared to order the dying Elizabeth to bed. "Must!" she cried, as a spark of the old dignity kindled the shrivelled, sinking frame, "is must a word to be addressed to princes. Little man, little man! thy ather, if he had been alive, durst not have used that word."

The remaining mansion, York House, is immortalised as the home of our great philosopher, Bacon. He loved passionately its great gates, its latticed windows, and the sloping gardens, where across the intervening fields could be seen his master's palace of Whitehall. For in its walls he first saw light and spent his early years; in it he closed his father's eyes and won the love of Alice Barnham.

It was the scene of his greatest triumphs and his fall. Piteous is the old man's struggle to retain the house against the greed of Buckingham. "No," he exclaimed, "York House is the house wherein my father died, and wherein I first breathed, and there will I yield my last breath, if it so please God, and the King will give me leave." But the power of Steenie prevailed; it soon passed into his hands and became transformed into a palace of mirrors and art treasures. Reubens' private collection or pictures was bought for f.10,000 to grace the salons, side by side with Titian's "Ecce Homo," seventeen Tintorets and thirteen Paul Veronese. The Duke only used the building for the great fetes with which he entertained the representatives of foreign courts. Strange that so much beauty and splendour should fall by the common knife of a wronged dependant! York Gate alone remains to remind us of one who .-

"... in the course of one revolving moon, Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon."



OCCUPATIONS FOR GENTLEWOMEN.

V.—TEACHING.

BY JANE LEE.

T N thinking of teaching as a profession for women there are several distinct questions to be considered-the question, who are naturally fitted and who are not fitted to be teachers; the question, whether special training is or is not advisable for all who intend to teach; the question, whether too many women do not choose teaching as their profession: so that the market is, so to speak, overstocked, and it might be wise for those who must earn their living to turn to anything else rather than to this; the question how to teach, or rather, is there any distinct advice, are there any rules and precepts, the fruit, the outcome, the result of others' experience, which may be given to those who are young, who are, as we say, beginning life -and beginning life as teachers? There are, I know, many more points which might be discussed here, but these three or four occur to me as the most important.

We are always being reminded at present that we are living at the end of a century; that we are in the midst of changes and transitions; that one of the greatest changes which have taken place, and are taking place, is in the position of women. No sensible person would, perhaps, dispute these assertions-whether these changes are to him a subject for regret or rejoicing is, of course, another matter. Of the changes which have come to pass as regards the position of women, and the opinions held about our duties and aims in life, the one which most affects society-and, therefore, the most important-is, that it is now commonly admitted to be no less the duty of women than of men to lead useful lives, and, where necessary, to earn their living.

In the present, as much as in the past, most people will allow that, speaking generally, the best and highest life a woman can live is the married life; and that husband, children, hearth and home, supply, naturally and obviously, her work and duties. There are, no doubt, exceptional cases—there are exceptions to everything; yet it is none the less true that it is better and happier for women to marry—to be wives and mothers, than to be anything else.

But many women do not marry; and that such women may not limit themselves to a narrow, useless existence is one of the changes in opinion, and sentiment, and fact, which the nineteenth century has brought about. Moreover, it is not only those who are forced by circumstances to support themselves whom we now expect to work, and to make themselves useful to society; we expect this from all women. It has taken a long time for the principle to be accepted, but it has at length prevailed—that, for women as much as for men, to lead an empty, aimless life destroys both body and soul; while a life of active and patient endeavour deserves and wins blessing and honour.

In by-gone years, when any definite work was thought of for any woman-old or young, educated or uneducated, helpless or vigorous-the only employment that suggested itself was teaching; and too often the entirely incompetent, or those who had no natural bent or desire, became teachers, and very bad teachers too.* Looking back one blames women, no doubt, for attempting what they were not able to perform; but many obvious excuses might be made for them. In the present day conditions and circumstances are different; a wider range of choice is open to women; there is, therefore, less to be said for those who become teachers when they are unqualified. But, at the same time, far more women now look for work than did so in the past; and though there are other occupations available, the profession which still offers most opportunities is certainly teaching. And hence the question arises as to fitness or unfitness, as to natural aptitude and natural inaptitude.

Now, no thoughtful person could, I am persuaded, make teaching the business of his life with a light heart without pausing to consider and count the cost; for no work entails heavier responsibility, no calling in life has greater power for good and for evil; and, therefore, a sense of the sacredness of

* In making this general statement I ought not to forget that in all times not a few women have chosen the religious life as their profession; and that, in the past as in the present, those who possessed rare artistic gifts have devoted themselves to music or painting. his vocation is, to my mind, indispensable in a teacher. The whole future of his pupils, their character as well as their intellect, is influenced by what he teaches and how he teaches it. The teacher who does not prepare his work carefully; who does not give his pupils of his very best; who is unpunctual, or careless, or in any sense slovenly, is, in my sight, despicable and unworthy of his calling. "Take leisure for contemplation," is the saying of an old writer; do not engage in the work of teaching without the sure conviction that you have the patience, the perseverance, the love of order, the spirit of a teacher in you.

It has often been said to me that, except for children, a lecture or regular instruction is a mistake: you can learn as well or better from books. Do not books contain the best thoughts of the greatest men living and dead? But who among us, who has ever listened to, and learned from, an able teacher, would admit the truth of this for one moment? Do we not still vividly remember the days when we were young; how our blood flowed faster, and our hearts beat higher as we listened; how in the glamour of his presence—as under the spell of a magician-hope rose high within us, that there was noble work for us also to do. One of us would discover a new planet, or write a history as immortal as Gibbon's, or "settle ὅτι 's business," or "properly base ove." But books alone will not awaken in students these feelings; you might as well take a young recruit and set him to read his drill book by himself in his room, and expect him to become a good soldier, when he had never heard the voice, or been in the presence of a distinguished leader, as look for great things from boys and girls who have never been in contact with, nor stimulated by, teachers who had won their admiration and love. But I have said all this only to show my conviction that the responsibilities of a teacher are vast; much is entrusted to him, and much is required of him.

And besides a fondness and enthusiasm for his profession, a teacher should have thoroughly studied and grasped the matter he wishes to impart. It will be said this is a truism. This goes without saying; knowledge of your subject is the first qualification, and should go before every other. In part I agree; it certainly ought to go without saying that sound knowledge is necessary to a teacher; but I think, at the same time, that I am right in

putting the gift of enthusiasm or ardour first, and the properties of learning and knowledge second. Moreover, nowadays, few ignorant or half-ignorant persons would venture to offer themselves as teachers; were they to do so, they would soon be discovered and exposed. Examinations appear to many of us to be no ideal tests of acquirement, but they certainly, in a large measure, guard society against the danger of ignorance on the part of those who undertake to teach. It is a rare thing at the present day for anyone to be entrusted with such work who cannot produce certificates of his or her competence, or who cannot point to a University Degree.

The question of the special training of teachers is a difficult and a perplexing one. Prejudice and custom are in England entirely adverse to it. Young men go from Oxford and Cambridge, or having taken their degree at London or at Victoria University, straight to the public schools of England without any definite training, and in course of time become good teachers, excellent teachers, or else they fail, and turn to some other work. And it is the same with girls; from Cambridge and Oxford, or having graduated at London or Victoria University, girls go to the high schools of England as mistresses, in the majority of cases without any previous training, and with the same results as in the case of men. They succeed, or they fail and give up the profession. Would they have perfected themselves sooner had they had more systematic preparation? Or would their incompetence have been discovered earlier, and would some of them have chosen a different sphere? The last would very probably have happened; the first seems to me open to question. I know well that Germany is a better-educated country than England, and in Germany "padagogik" is an important and compulsory part of every teacher's education. I know, too, that in other affairs of life we expect and demand special training (when we are ill, for example, we much prefer certificated nurses to amateurs); but still I am not convinced that special training is desirable for all who teach. For some it may be so; it may even be indispensable. Anyone who is shy, or without self-reliance, or who has not been educated in a really good school, public or private, I should send to a training college. But with regard to those girls who have been at a public school, where they have

heard the best teachers of England teach, with regard to those who are looking forward to their work with ardour, and confidence, and hope, I must say I should hesitate. If such girls should lose their freshness and originality, and become, in any sense, stereotyped in the process of training, will they not lose far more than they will gain? Let them read the books of men like Fitch and Thring; let them read the lives of teachers like Dr. Arnold; but is it well to send them to any training college? Up to this time I remain unconvinced.

The question whether too many women do not make teaching their profession is important, but not difficult to answer. The case stands thus. Too many women of one sort or another do offer themselves as teachers at present; but too many competent, capable women do not come forward. A good post in a good girl's high school is vacant—say at Wimbledon, or Kensington, or Notting Hill—and there will be, perhaps, twenty applicants. But, of these twenty some fifteen will be incompetent people, who ought never to have become candidates at all; and, of the remainder, two at the most will be really suitable.

Certainly, of the Newnham College students who, after leaving Cambridge, look for employment in high schools, and who are thoroughly efficient, all, or nearly all, obtain engagements; and those who fail to do so, or who are unable to keep their posts. are those who are not fitted for their work, and who ought never to have undertaken it. Against one branch of the teaching profession there has been heretofore a strong feeling or prejudice in our girls' colleges; a feeling which is growing less, but which still exists - the prejudice, I mean, against the office and work of a private teacher. It arises in part from the traditions which are abroad among us as to the dreary life and position c. a governess. and in part from the fact that the career of a mistress in a public school is freer, more independent, and happier.

In a high school the mistress teaches from nine to one on five days in the week, and from two to four on some days—the rest of her time is at her own disposal, and she has one-fourth of the year as holidays. She has, therefore, leisure for all sorts of varied interests; for friends, for books, for music, for pictures, and so on. She can, as we say, enjoy life. But the case of a private teacher has, up to the present, been very different. She

has had each day little time that she could call her own, and during the year she has had short holidays-she has had no leisure for outside interests, in fact, she has had very few of the joys of existence. Of course, there are exceptions, and some governesses' lives have been happy ones. But, putting aside an exceptional instance here and there, the lot of a private teacher has not been a desirable one. The only compensation is that the pay is apparently higher than that of an assistant mistress. The salary given in a high school averages from f. 100 to f. 160 a year, without board and rooms; the salary of a first-class private governess should be from £,100 to £,120 a year, with board and rooms. This seems at first sight to be much better remuneration, although the difference in absolute amount between the income of an assistant mistress who receives (relatively speaking) good pay, i.e. £,150 or £,160 a year, and the income of a private governess is not very considerable. For, as things are at present, few, if any, high school mistresses spend more than £,50 a year on board and lodging during the three school terms. There is this also to be remembered, that while a governess has no advancement or betterment in life to look forward to, an assistant mistress, on the contrary, hopes to become, or knows that she has the chance of becoming, a head mistress; of winning one of the prizes of the teaching profession; of having an income of £,300 or £,400 a year, and an assured and respected position. Nothing is further from my thoughts or wishes than to seek to deter welleducated girls from becoming governesses. For many children, I believe, home education is better than school; and these children, quite as much as they who go to school, want the best teachers, not the second best. What is needed is that parents should perceive and learn that the traditions and customs of the past must be forgotten; that, in order to secure the first-rate teachers for their children, they must give them more leisure, more command of their time, and more freedom; that they must treat them with more consideration and more respect than in the past. Once this change in public opinion is brought about, the reluctance to become a governess will, I feel sure, grow less, or cease to be.

There is one other branch of teaching to which I have often wished that gentlewomen, and especially those who have had a University education, would turn their thoughts—I mean that given in the

elementary schools. We all talk a great deal at present about the benefit of bringing classes together; of pulling down barriers; of sharing with others not only the material, but also the immaterial, blessings we possess; and some of us not only talk, but act. This is a democratic age, we say, and if the masses and the classes could come more into contact, and could learn to know each other's good qualities, then the dangers inherent in democracy would be lessened, kinder feelings would spring up, the sense of antagonism or enmity would vanish. One thinks, with pleasure and hope, of the good that Toynbee Hall, and the several University settlements in the poor parts of our great towns, are doing. Now, no way could be found, I conceive, more effective for bringing different classes together than if women, well educated and refined, were to become teachers of the children in English elementary schools. The state of education in England has improved greatly since the passing of Mr. Forster's Act in 1870, but, while much has been gained, something has been lost. In the old days of voluntary schools the squire's daughter and the clergyman's daughter had their classes, as a matter of course, in the village or the town schools-and affection and sympathy sprang to life and grew up between teachers and children, and between the homes and families of both.

In the board schools it rarely or never happens that volunteer teachers are admitted; one strong link binding class to class is broken, and opportunities once available are missed and are never found again. But I believe there is a remedy if well-educated gentlewomen will come forward and become teachers in our elementary schools.

Thus it seems evident, on the whole, that the teaching profession is not so far overcrowded; that there is plenty of work to do for those who are really qualified and competent; that either in public schools or in private schools as private teachers—or if they will accept it, in elementary schools—there is occupation for all.

Before I end I must try to answer the question: are there any rules and precepts—is there any advice the outcome of personal experiences—which can be given to young teachers beginning their career? I have said before, that to love your work and to know your subject are above all things necessary; and to this I would add most emphatically, be interesting, never go to your class tired, or out of humour; if you do so you will bore your pupils,

whereas your business is to interest. Then get as soon as you can on pleasant, easy terms with them; do not be afraid of them, and do not let them be afraid of you. Incite them to ask you questions about all matters in any way related to the subject with which they are busy. Never be ashamed to say you do not know, if you cannot answer some question, nor to own you have made a mistake, when you have made a mistake. Do not allow your pupils to fritter away and waste time; say to them if you had five hundred years to live instead of a possible seventy, you might give five or six years to learning one language, or studying one science. but as it is, you must be economical. You cannot afford to; you dare not idle. Impress on them the importance of using every means, of not despising any way of adding to their knowledge; give them counsel somewhat of this sort: suppose you want to remember the names of the seven poets whom, in the sixteenth century, Frenchmen of letters nicknamed the Pléïade-make out of the words Dubellay, Ronsard, Daurat, Jodelle, De Thyard, Belleau, Baïf, a jingling rhyme and you will never forget these names again; or you want to grasp the dates and the order of the historical events of the fifth century B.C. in Greece. Take one or two important dates-such as Salamis, 480; Marathon, 490-group around them anterior and subsequent events, and, simply by keeping hold of these two great dates, you will find that you will recollect the time when other or less important events occurred. You want to acquire a vocabulary in some language whatever language it may be you are working at resolve to learn 20 words a day. Take 20 words you have lately had to search for in your dictionary, write them out with the English opposite; carrythem about with you during the day, read them, perhaps, some six times; before evening you will know those 20 words, and you will never forget them. Twenty words are enough; do not exceed 20. It will mean 120 a week, 480 a month. If you did this steadily for a year you would have a vocabulary of some 6,000 words; a vocabulary which few people possess of any language except their mother tongue. These and such-like fragments of advice which I have given to my pupils during the years in which I have been a teacher, flash across my memory as I write, and similar rules and precepts will occur to the mind of any teacher who may read these pages.

THE SILVER MUG.

By Ella J. Fraser.



HE wind was howling wildly around our snug Nova Scotian home that evening. Not far away we could hear the incoming tide battling with the shore, and from over the

came the ceaseless toot of the fog horn. It was a cheerless night enough, and we turned willingly away from our stirring out-of-door sports to feast upon dough-nuts and cider, and beg a story of the olden time from grandfather.

The dear old man gazed into the fireplace in perplexity, and sipped his mug of cider yet more slowly.

"I'm afeard you young folks have about cleared my memory of old-time tales," he quavered, "but," as the firelight danced for a moment on the amber liquid, "happen I never told you how I came to own this bit of silver."

It was a quaint mug or flagon, made, with the exception of its slender, graceful handles, in perfect imitation of a barrel. We stared at it wonderingly, and then begged for its story, which I give you, so far as I can remember it, in grand-father's own words.

He was a curious story-teller. All the vernacular, which clung to his speech like a chestnut-burr to its nut, seemed to desert him when a tale of the olden time aroused him; and he showed then such an imagination, and would give such vivid expression to the pictures which passed through his mind, that we young people regarded him with silent awe. The old man half closed his eyes, the better to bring those long-gone scenes before him, and began.

It was a fair land, this Acadia of ours, in the olden days, when my father, your great-grandfather,

children, brought his wife and bairns to win health and name and fortune so far from the old English home. There were few clearings in Western Nova Scotia, where he chose to cast his lot, and the swelling hills were still covered with tall pines and spruces. The moose and bear had their homes in thick wood, where the sly fox scarcely knew any dread of man, so seldom was he disturbed; the squirrels lived their lives in peace, scolding only at the blue-birds and robins who threatened their stores of nuts. In the summer, a sweet chorus of song went up from every bird-home. In the winter, a great silence fell upon the green wood. The running brook was hushed, and scarce one of the larger animals would show himself till the white pall was removed.

It was just such a winter day at Chebogue. There was a network of tracery on the white fields where the fibre of the snow-shoe had left its track, and, for the rest, the glistening crusty white snow reflected in an unbroken glare the rays of the setting sun. The trees and bushes held out their white-heaped branches, thankful when the stirring breeze relieved them of part of their load, and the deserted nests of the robins were full to overflowing with the piled flakes.

Up the hill, in the heart of the clearing, stood our home, the first house in Chebogue. A well-shovelled path led from its hospitable door to the skirts of the wood, but already the drifting snow was obliterating all footprints. The great chimney of the house sent up a column of sparks and smoke, and the lantern in the window was a welcome guide to father as he came tramping up from the wood. It was a cheery home, and yet a sad one, for the rigours of the winter weather had told severely on our little family; and our sweet mother had left us a year before the time of my story, leaving a tiny babe for Celia to be both mother and sister to.

Celia was the prop and mainstay of the house. She it was who kept the house-place immaculate, and who ran to help father off with his greatcoat, while I unlaced his coarse, damp shoes, and scam-

pered over the uneven floor for the list slippers which Celia had left warming on the hearth. She was a pretty, flaxen-haired girl of sixteen; her bluegrey eyes snapped with determination; her movements were swift and energetic; yet the cares of life were already pressing heavily on her young shoulders, as they did, perhaps, on all those daughters of the early settlers. Owing to her constant care, the keeping-room was a most homelike place: not beautiful, perhaps, for the rounded logs of the wall were hidden only by a rough plaster of moss and mud, and there were no modern portières or other decorations. From the ceiling there hung. perhaps, a few hams, and above the high, narrow mantle-shelf were suspended bundles of fragrant herbs, strings of dried apples, and vellow ears of seed corn. The table, the stools, and the old-time "settle" were but the unskilled work of a neighbouring carpenter, but the fire-place was the centre and heart of the home. The red brick hearthstone shone from its vigorous polishings. The yellow flames danced gleefully against the big black log, gleamed on the brass and irons, and warmed the dark corner where the big wooden cradle stood, in which our darling Baby Betty slumbered.

Our little family was soon gathered about the supper table before the hearth, and father paused for a moment ere he asked a blessing on the outspread meal. His eyes dwelt proudly on Celia for a moment, and then half-turning, he sadly scanned each member of our little family, for it was Christmas Eve, and memories of his English home and of his dead wife rose shadow-like before him. I, of course, did not understand him, but Celia's eyes brimmed for a second as he turned to her again, and then humbly craved a blessing on the meal.

It was well that the keen winter air whetted the appetites of all, for there were no luxuries for us that Christmastide; but we fell to our meal with a cheerful clatter of pewter spoons and silver porringers. The porringers were an unaccustomed elegance. An eccentric aunt had bequeathed them to Celia, and they constituted our entire store of family plate. Usually they were swathed in green baize wrappings in the chimney cupboard, but to-day they had been taken from their hiding-place to lend a festive air to the evening's meal. Just then they were full of Indian mush, plentifully besprinkled with good maple molasses. There was cracked maple sugar, too, to sweeten the fragrant "yarb tea," a

plate of substantial slices of rye bread, and a yellow delf bowl of apple sauce made from fruit of our own raising. All this, with the hissing mush, made as tasty a supper as one could wish for.

Suddenly Baby Betty started up in her cradle, pointing her tiny forefinger at the window, "Baby da, baby da," she repeated, joyously.

Sure enough, close to the glazed, icy pane, was pressed the dark face of a papoose, while strange voices were plainly to be heard outside.

"It must be a peaceful errand, else they'd never have brought a child " said father, gently, as Celia shuddered with fear, and I, with a bravery born of the moment, strode towards the rifles hung on the wall. It was always a serious matter, our dealing with the Indians. While we had no wish to incur ill-will, we could not forget the many tales we had heard of Indian treachery and revenge. Still we opened the door and bade the poor frozen creatures welcome. Celia took the wee babe, rubbed its cold hands, and finally nested it in the great black cradle with Betty, and the two children babbled together happily. Now that we were assured that no immediate danger threatened, Celia made ready a bowl of mush for each of the new-comers, who half-sat, half-reclined on the floor in front of the fire, stolidly thawing their stiff fingers, and untying their frozen moccasins. There were three men as well as the squaw who had carried the papoose. The men evidently knew but little English, for it was only with much difficulty that we learned the object of their journey at this inclement season.

The woman was tall and stately, and her gestures and bearing showed plainly her superiority to the rest of the company; and partly from her broken talk we ascertained that she was a chief's wife, and the mother of the child—that they were bound for the far north, where her husband was impatiently awaiting her.

Celia brought one of the Indians a bowl of mush, but he waved her away, pointing eagerly to the silver porringers now standing empty on the table. The girl gave one quick questioning glance at our father. Bravely swallowing the lump in her throat, she emptied the bowls into the shining porringers, and again proffered them. The child-like glee of the Indians over the dishes was curious to see. After the mush had disappeared, they held them to the firelight, nudging one

another to look at the dwarfed reflections of their dark faces, and grimacing fearfully at the hideous pictures. One man laid his down by his side as if he had determined to retain it; but at a word from the squaw, who pointed meaningly to the papoose now asleep in Betty's fat, baby arms, he seemed to change his mind, and at another word the porringers were yielded up somewhat reluctantly with some incoherent words of thanks. They watched Celia furtively as, after rinsing the porringers out, she again swathed them in their baize wrappings and replaced them in the cupboard. Presently we all retired; father solemnly committed our solitary little household to the great Protector, but Celia, with less faith, tossed in uneasy dreams of her precious porringers. The Indians slumbered peacefully by the fire; the squaw, covered by a hooked mat, lay near the cradle, which had now but a single occupant, for Betty was snugly nested in Celia's arms.

There was not a soul awake in that log-house, Not a sound of life save the ticking of the great wooden clock, or the stir of a shy field-mouse, driven for the winter to warmer quarters, sharpening his claws on the log wainscot; or perhaps a soft thud, as a charred end fell among the redashes. The low, even breath of the strange guests did not fan the fading fire into brightness. Outdoors the storm had spent itself, and the white, cold moon came staring in at the group of sleepers. A moonbeam fell on the closed eyelids of the papoose, who stirred uneasily. The slight sound was enough. In a trice, the squaw and the Indians were awake and making preparations for another march. Swiftly the moccasin-strings were twisted about the ankles, and the woman gently took up the baby. One man pointed to the chimney closet as if regretful to leave behind the hidden treasures, but the chief's wife, tall and commanding, beckoned him away. The great house door closed silently behind them. Not so silently, however, but that Celia had been aroused from her uneasy dreams, and lay half-awake in sleepy terror. Out in the frosty moonlight the little party hastened on, taking the shortest way over the open fields, or wending cautiously through the under brush of the wood, with seemingly scarce a grateful thought for the shelter they had left behind.

The heavy fire of the evening had loosened and melted the snow on the roof, and had, perhaps,

shaken a little the chimney of sun-dried bricks; or it may have been that in 'settling' after the last frosty weather, a crack had been made in the flue. Somehow, somewhere a spark had caught, and all about the great chimney the roof was charred and blackened. Little clouds of steam began to rise.

Celia sat upon her rustling straw bed and strained her ears. The stir below had ceased, but there was a crisp noise in the air; perhaps but the rattling of the frozen elm branches, she thought, as she shivered in the cold air, and drew the homespun blanket more closely about her.

Again the crackle. Then a hissing sound as of melting snow. She could stand it no longer. Crossing the narrow hall she came to where I lay snoring lustily on my back. Wrapped in our bedclothes we began to investigate. The Indians were gone. The living room was quiet and undisturbed, the cradle pillows still bore the hollowed impress of the papoose's form. As I turned to laugh at Celia's fear, a brick fell from the fire-place at my feet. Then another and another, while the sickening smell of burning soot filled the room, and a gleam of flame began to play on the high mantel and about the window casing. Celia looked at me in blank dismay. Our home was on fire and would be destroyed. It was but the work of an instant to rouse father, to muffle Betty tightly up in a quilt, and to hastily seize some of the bedding before the flames were arising in every direction.

A plaintive lowing and basing arose from the barn. I ran out to throw open the door and to unfasten the cows, which were already nearly suffocated. Away they plunged bellowing, to seek the shelter of the wood, followed by a half-dozen dazed and wondering sheep. A tiny, winter-born lamb bleated pitifully as its mother stumbled down the hill. I carried it to where our little shivering group stood.

It was so mercilessly cold in the night air. We cowered gratefully over the red ruins of our home, thankful for warmth, even from that unhappy source. Betty whimpered in father's arms, and begged pitifully for her cradle-bed, and the deserted lamb thrust his headunder my arm and moaned almost humanly. Father was quite broken down over this new misfortune. I was but a lad of ten, and Betty was but a helpless baby. We seemed naturally to turn to

Celia for advice. It was a comfort even to find her downright angry. With a tense, white face she vowed vengeance on the Indians.

"They fired us, I know," she cried, "so we'd not find out that they'd stolen the silver."

"Hush, daughter," said father, sadly. "Tis no time to talk of revenge. We may be perished of cold before dawn, for there's no shelter these five miles."

A bright thought crossed the girl's mind— "There's the little summer-house you built for me last summer, father."

"Ay, lass," said father, sadly, "but it's built but of light willows, and would be no protection against this keen night wind."

"But, father," interrupted Celia, impatiently, "there's the straw we stored in casks there when there was no room left in the hay-loft."

We followed the eager girl down over the steep hill on which the homestead had been built, sinking ankle-deep in the new-fallen snow to the hard undercrust. What a welcome sight it was, that little arbour, still covered with brown stems and rustling leaves, where the morning glories and hop vines had made it a summer-house of loveliness. Inside were the barrels and casks in which our belongings had come from England, now stored with straw. It was but the work of a moment to pry the heads off, and then, turning them on their sides, at Celia's direction, to scoop a hole in each.

The odour of straw is grateful to me yet when I think of that bitter cold night—

There were just three of them. Celia with Baby Betty curled up in one. Father packed me snugly in another, with the woolly lamb for company and warmth, and, wearied with the excitement, we all slept soundly in our strange chambers.

One bright summer's evening, when we were again at our twilight meal, our guests of the winter returned. This time the chief accompanied his wife, who bore strapped on her shoulders the darkeyed papoose. They came swiftly towards our new home, the woman pointing significantly to the site of the old homestead on the neighbouring hill. Father and I met them at the door. Celia, who still cherished revengeful thoughts, stood near us with shining eyes.

The squaw pointed smilingly to her: "She it is who was food-giver, who brought the good Indian corn in shining vessels like the new moon."

The chief, with a quick, grateful look, pressed forward with a gift of shells wrought into a curious belt, and at his signal several of his followers came up the hillside, bearing heavy haunches of smoked venison, a string of speared salmon still gleaming with water, and a magnificent pair of antlers. The woman, gazing earnestly at father, explained, "For protection to our son." We took the gifts wondering what they might betoken. Was the chief endeavouring to make reparation for our burned home and for the stolen silver? Then, at father's request, they again entered our home to break bread with us. The chief looked searchingly about as Celia prepared a frugal meal of bread and milk, and talked rapidly to the squaw.

Should not he too eat from the shining vessels? Was he not a chief who had brought us his best?

With an outburst of long-pent rage, Celia turned on them. "You hateful creatures," she cried; "you know you stole our silver and then destroyed our dear home to hide the theft! How you have the face to come here again I cannot imagine."

The Indians watched her with interest, not attaching much to her words. But the squaw, who had caught a hint of her meaning, put aside her food. "Come," she said, haughtily, "the white face woman say Steal. We will not again eat food here. Better long marches and little food; better lie in a snow drift than by her fires."

The chief rose with anger kindling in his look, while Celia, alarmed at the uproar she had caused, began to sob pitifully.

"My men no steal, no steal," he repeated, impatiently. "I no hurt you, you poor white crywoman. This man's business," and he laid his hand on his tomahawk and turned to father threateningly. "You say steal, too?"

The other Indians were sure of one thing, their chief had been insulted. They rose too, and with uncouth grimaces began to take part in the conversation.

In a few words father told his story; how the travellers had come for shelter and food, which had been gladly given; how the Indians had admired the porringers, and how loath they were to give them up; and lastly, of our escape from our burning home soon after the departure of our guests, and the terrible exposure of the winter's night.

The chief crossed to where Celia sat, with her

head buried in her hands. "You had cause," he said regretfully.

His anger seemed quite asleep, yet a stern look shone in his dark eyes. "If they have stolen they shall restore fourfold," he said, gravely.

He called the three men who had formed his wife's escort, and questioned them in their own tongue. The men stoutly denied the charge, calling solemnly upon the Great Spirit to witness their truth. The squaw rose suddenly. "Come," she cried, and, following her lead, the entire party left our home to climb the neighbouring hillside. Then we saw them disappear in the hollow of the ruined house. Father, Celia, and I followed at a little distance. We soon stood on the hill-top looking down at its choking burdocks and matting groundsel which were already filling the site of the old homestead. The Indians began throwing out the bricks of the old chimney mostly in broken fragments. After a half-hour's work the woman gave a glad cry. A heavy mass of dull silver was found coated with ashes full of bits of brick and soot, but still unmistakably silver. They carried it to our home with great jubilation; the lost was found and their honour was vindicated.

"You had reason; but in time to come think good of the Indian, and he will do good," said the chief to father.

The squaw tightened the bands of fragrant grass

that bound the papoose to her back, and gazed sadly at Celia.

"It will be peace," she said, coldly, "because of kindness to the little one; but it is not friendship where honour is doubted."

The child crowed over his mother's shoulders. He drew his tiny hands caressingly over her dark cheeks.

Celia, with eyes brimming with tears, pointed to a tiny plot in the field below.

"Our baby lies there," she said; "for the love you bear your little one you will forgive and forget."

The dark face softened when the little mound was seen. The woman, with a quick movement, drew Celia close to her bosom.

"I, too, have sorrowed," she said, simply; and the two women wept in each other's arms.

"The sun is low," interrupted the chief, who stood with averted face. "We must walk the seven hills to-night"; and, gathering his little party about him, they disappeared in the twilight.

That's all the story, children. Father had the silver sent to the nearest village, and made up into these barrel mugs, so's we might keep in mind how the Lord had delivered us in our need. The mugs are scattered now, for they're mostly in the hands of the third generation; but I never use mine without a loving thought for the old home, and a little feeling of regret that we misjudged those Indians so.

ROSE MARIE.

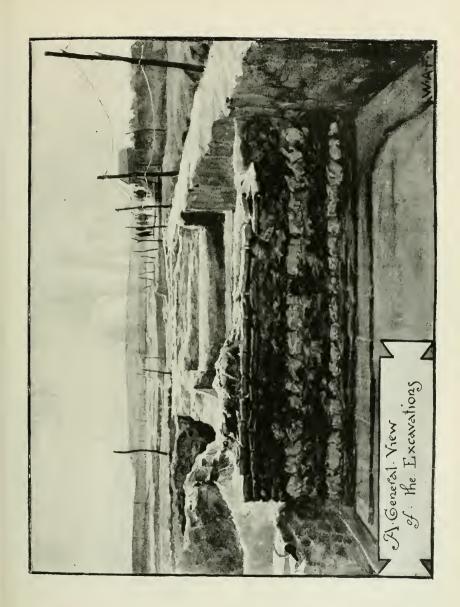
THE snows have melted from the hills!
The lambs are out upon the lea!
Come down, and pick the daffodils,
I'll weave a crown of gold for thee,
Maid Rose Marie!

She comes—her wild-flower face alight With all the Springtide's ecstasy, With dancing footstep, poised for flight, Comes Rose Marie! O happy day, too bright to last!
O my crowned Love, what frighted thee,
When o'er the sky the shadow passed,
And Hope and Joy made haste to flee
With Rose Marie?

Here shall they lie—the withered wreath,
The maid asleep so dreamlessly,
And I will keep my watch beneath
The shadow of my Lady's tree,
Sweet Rose Marie!

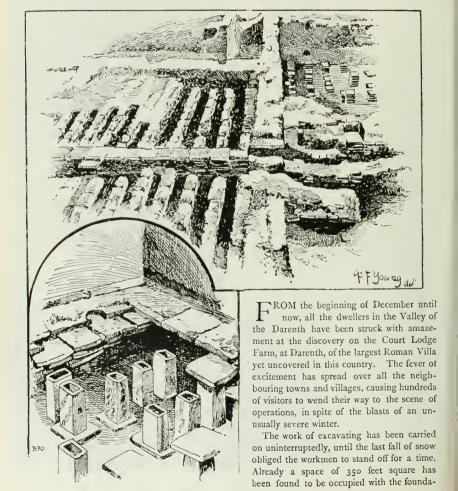
Till spring shall wake in other bowers, And other flowers, as bright of blee, Shall twine a wreath as fair as ours For happy lovers yet to be, My Rose Marie!

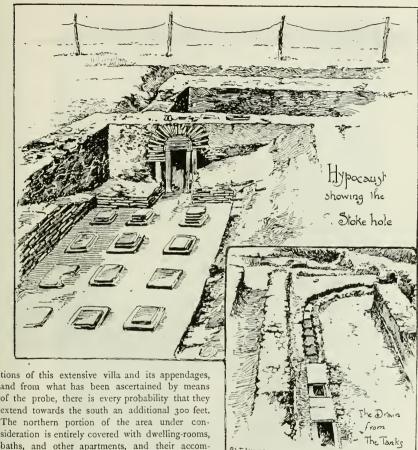
CHARLOTTE BAIN.



THE ROMAN VILLA AT DARENTH, KENT.

By AN ANTIQUARIAN.





tions of this extensive villa and its appendages, and from what has been ascertained by means of the probe, there is every probability that they extend towards the south an additional 300 feet. The northern portion of the area under consideration is entirely covered with dwelling-rooms, baths, and other apartments, and their accompanying corridors. In front of these are two large courts, separated from the house by a corridor which runs along its whole front. The courts are 92 feet in length, and 90 feet and 78 feet in width, respectively, being divided by a building 84 feet in length, and 11 feet in width. The foundation walls of this long gallery measure, where perfect, 4 feet in thickness, and are faced inside with tiles to a depth of seventeen courses.

At the head of this is a curious semi-circular cistern, with a water-way into it. The tank was, doubtless, originally lined with lead, as the rough-

ness of the interior indicates that something of the kind has been removed from it. The numerous rooms in the northern wing of the establishment, already referred to, are mostly floored with a hard white concrete, mixed with small beach pebbles, but three of them are paved with red tesserae. The walls are all adorned with distemper painting, finished off at the floor-line with a moulded skirting of red cement. The colours upon the fragments of plaster which have been saved, are very varied and brilliant in hue, and are to this day uninjured.



The designs consist chiefly of bands of colour, with here and there dashes of leaves, and attempts at floral devices introduced. One piece actually shows the splashes upon it caused by a careless artist working with too full a brush. The colours represented are white, yellow, red, black, brown, plum, blue, green, and all shades of grey and drab.

Nine of these apartments were probably for summer use, as none are fitted with heating-apparatus. The largest room in the villa measures nearly 50 feet in length, by 16 feet in width. Its walls are at the present time 3 feet 8 inches high, and a large extent of painting is still visible upon them.

We will now pass on to the baths, of which there are three at Darenth. The largest is 40 feet in length by 10 feet in width, with four bold steps descending into it. These steps are rounded at the edges, so that the bathers might sit upon them in comfort. The floor of the bath is paved with tiles, and the walls and steps are of fine cement, laid upon tiles. At some period, during the occupancy of the Romans, this fine swimming bath was rendered useless for bathing purposes by a wall having been built across its centre. This said wall is an interesting example of Roman masonry, being constructed of alternate courses of tiles, chalk, and flint.

On the north side of the great bath are the two others. One was evidently a hot bath, as it has a hypocaust under it. Both are about 7 feet square. Adjoining these baths are remains of the apartments connected with them. Bathing was regarded by the Romans as one of the necessaries of life, and was daily indulged in; but it is very doubtful if they enjoyed their ablutions in this miserable climate as they did in their own country. In the graves of these old colonists we occasionally find the strigils with which they scraped their bodies after bathing or gymnastic exercises. With these curious instruments are sometimes found the bronze vessels which contained oil for greasing the edges of the strigils, so that they might not hurt the body.

At the eastern and western ends of the northern wing of the villa the rooms turn and continue for some distance towards the south, along the sides of the courts. As was customary, the eastern or cold side of the house was devoted to the heated apartments. These are especially interesting, and in a

good state of preservation. The floors of these rooms are suspended about 2 feet, upon supports of various kinds. In one instance fifty-two little columns or pilæ of tiles had been used; in another, thirty-four flue tiles held up the floor, while others were supported by rows of chalk blocks placed about 6 inches from row to row.

Upon these different supports tiles were first of all laid; above them a thick bed of concrete, and over that, in some cases, occurred tesselated pavement. Charcoal fires were used to warm these rooms, and the archways through which the stoker fed the furnaces are, in two places, perfect. The smoke and fumes from the hypocausts were carried off to the roof by means of flue-tiles placed vertically up the walls. These remain in situ in several of the rooms.

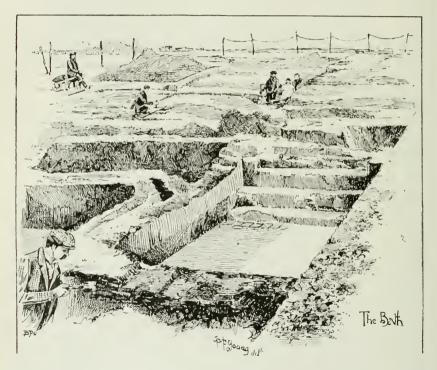
On the outskirts of the villa, granaries and outbuildings are now being traced, while close to the river Darenth a series of tanks, conduits, and drains have been opened out, the use of which it is not easy to explain; but in all probability they were connected with some trade or manufacture carried on by the owner of this extensive villa.

The objects of antiquity found during the excavations have not been particularly numerous, as no refuse heaps or rubbish-pits have been hit Coins of Domitian, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Tetricus, Constantine the Great. Valentinianus, and Valens came to light, the majority being of Tetricus. Articles in bone comprised pins for fastening the dress or hair, a shuttle -probably used in making fishing nets-and the handle of a lady's fan. Several tines of deers' antlers were found, cut and fashioned for use as tools, one very good example being in the form of a double-pronged hoe for making seed-drills. The objects in bronze consisted of a prettily enamelled piece of inlay work, probably from some piece of furniture; a circular ornament, also enamelled, of chaste design; bangles, armlets, and rings; the handle of a key, a handle terminating in a leopard's head, with eyes of red enamel; studs, stud-heads, tweezers, and a few fragments of armlets of Kimmeridge shale, and jet. Among the iron objects may be enumerated a large quantity of nails of all sizes, staples, hooks, &c., a spear-head, and several knives, many of which have rings or loops for attachment to the girdle. A few pieces of lead were met with and two leaden howls

It was evident that the tanks and other receptacles for holding water, in the villa, had mostly been fitted with leaden pipes, as one could clearly see where they had been torn out by some ancient thief.

Of pottery but very few pieces were discovered. These included Samian, Durobrivian, and Upchurch ware. The so-called Samian is a Gaulish imitation of the beautiful ware made at Arezzo: the towards the brow of the hill; about 5 feet of soil have washed down over the floors of the rooms. This is due entirely to natural causes, such as rainwash, the shifting of earth by wind, the decay of vegetation, and the agency of earth-worms.

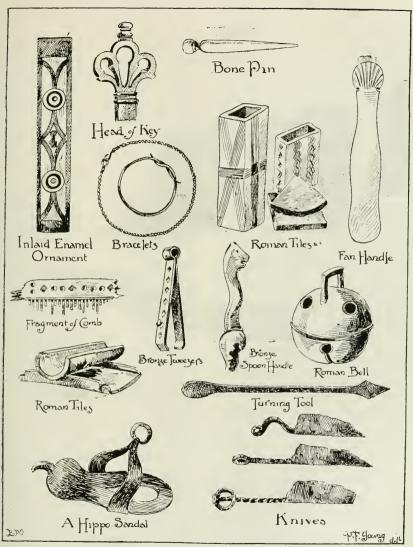
Another puzzling problem to the ordinary observer is, what has become of the material of which the superstructure of the villa was composed? This is not a difficult question to answer, as, after the place



Durobrivian came from the potteries at Caistor-onthe-Nen in Northamptonshire; and the Upchurch ware from the banks of the Medway, below the village of Upchurch, the site of one of the most extensive potteries in Roman Britain.

One feature about the new discovery at Darenth, which came as a surprise to most people, is the great depth of earth which has accumulated over the ruins of the villa since its demolition. The building stands upon one side of a valley and

was abandoned, it naturally formed a stone and tile quarry for those who subsequently built in the immediate district. We find that the parish church of Darenth is constructed almost wholly from materials undoubtedly taken from the villa, which stands only a few hundred yards distant; and judging from old prints of the destroyed church of St. Margaret's, also close at hand, this, too, contained much Roman material, obtained from the same source.



REMAINS FOUND AT THE ROMAN VILLA.

Let us now see what connection the Darenth villa has with other discoveries which have been made in the district. The most important point is that it is in close proximity to Dartford, which stands upon the great Roman Way. In and around that town a goodly number of Roman remains have been found, chiefly of a sepulchral nature, which, judging from their rich material, showed that the occupants of the tombs were persons of opulence and rank. About three miles distant from the villa is Springhead, considered by most authorities to be the Roman station Vagniaca, mentioned in the Antonine Itinerary. This was a temporary halting-place for troops on the line of march, where refreshment and relays of horses could be obtained. All round Springhead remains have continually been discovered; it is, therefore, not surprising to find that in the immediate locality we have a substantial memorial of at least one of the Roman families which settled in Kent. It is not often that archæologists are enabled to work out an extensive discovery so fully as has been done at Darenth. This has been made possible by the liberality of Mr. E. Arnott Clower, Mrs. Rolls-Hoare, and Mr. T. Marchant.

Following the Roman occupation of the Darenth Valley, we find that about three-quarters of a mile to the south, in the parish of Horton Kirby, exists one of the cemeteries of the Anglo-Saxon tribes who settled in the district. This was partially exposed when the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway was constructed, and again later. when the "Home for Boys" was erected on the bank above the railway cutting. The graves were close together, the skeletons being accompanied by swords, spears, knives, umboes of shields, necklaces of beads, and other objects. grave were two of those saucer-shaped bronze brooches, which are of the highest rarity in Kent. such types being more commonly found in Gloucestershire, Berkshire, and Cambridgeshire. That there are other cemeteries in the immediate environs of Darenth belonging to these people, there can be no doubt, as the names of the surrounding villages are nearly all of Anglo-Saxon origin. Darenth is a corruption of Dour-went, derived from the Celtic "dur," meaning water.

On the Ordnance Survey map, a spot opposite the site of the villa is marked "Site of Roman Mill." This is purely conjectural. If there was ever a tradition to that effect it probably arose from the amount of Roman material which must for centuries have been lying along the edge of the river, and from that circumstance would give rise to the supposition that a mill had formerly existed there. The villa seems to have been liable, during the time it was occupied, to inundation by the river, for a wall 350 feet in length was built between the two. The foundations of this wall are 5 feet deep, again testifying to the accumulation of soil as before observed.

These Romans must have had a pleasant time of it in this quiet, secluded vale, the river full of fish. and the whole country teeming with game. land in the valley is rich, and capable of growing good crops of anything, advantages that would have prompted the erection of a large domain hereabout. The villa was approached in ancient times by a road, now called the "pack-way," which runs close by it on the east side. This road seems to have gone on originally to join the Watling Street at Dartford, but has since been diverted. present road, however, from Dartford to Darenth leads in a direct line to the farm on which the villa stood, and would, if ancient, be the more likely route. It is somewhat remarkable that so few Roman villas known to exist in this country, have either not been opened up at all, or only partially so. So many have been content to uncover a pavement or two, and then closing in without attempting to push the matter beyond. Only one in Kent has been properly explored, namely, that at Wingham. There are upwards of fifty sites where Roman buildings are known to exist in that county, all of which await investigation. It is a very easy matter to detect the presence of foundations in a field, as in dry summers the stunted growth of the corn growing on the lines of the walls, is a sure indication of masonry beneath. Sometimes the entire outline of a building may be traced about the time when the corn is coming into ear. If such a thing is suspected, the farmer will invariably supply additional information that will encourage you to ask further favours of the landlord and himself.

SCREWED UP TO THE STICKING-PLACE.

By Foster Watson.

I T would be interesting to discover whether, in proportion to the number of attempts made, there is not a greater percentage of failures in the easy, than in the difficult things of life. At any rate, from an examiner's point of view, it is often remarkable that difficult questions are attacked with vigorous success, whilst easy questions overcome not only the weaker spirits, but also some of the able answerers of the more difficult questions.

In an examination-paper I once asked for an explanation of the words *a human door*, in Wordsworth's "Lucy Gray":

"The sweetest thing that ever grew Beside a human door."

The poem was one which had been "prepared," together with other poems of Wordsworth, and the papers throughout showed signs of unusual appreciation of the spirit of the poet. Excellent answers were given to the question, Why is it so easy to parody Wordsworth? and on other matters requiring critical ability. But a human door was too much for the students. It was the antithesis of a question falling suá mole. It was an examiner's irony of simplicity. "A human door," said one student, "means a loop-hole of escape, by means of a human being." That was clever. It kept up the idea of a door, and introduced the idea of the wandering of "Lucy Gray." It was too clever.

"A human door," said another, "means a human stumbling-block." This answer is not so easy to follow. But it is lucidity itself, compared with the next answer. "A human door, means the bringing up of children by their parents." There are some examiners who attempt to explain fully the working of children's minds, whereby they come to give the mistaken answers. I am bound to say I am not of that sanguine cast. "A human door," says another, "is the heart." This student, no doubt, obtained high marks in physiology, and illustrates the doctrine held by some educationists, that tout est dans tout. One study bears upon and helps another. "Physiology," this pupil seems to say, "explains literature." "A human door," to quote another student, "refers to Luke, when he had to stand in a gap in a hedge and prevent the sheep from straying through it." There we have a vivid concrete picture designed by the candidate, and supplied with a wrongly applied Wordsworthian title.

I spoke of the examiner's irony of simplicity. But the examinee can repay that sort of thing. In answer to a question on the use of coins, a student (a girl) adapted herself to my comprehension by observing: "Now suppose, instead of using coins we had tables. It wouldn't be so nice to carry tables about instead of coins to pay for articles with!" Put this way, I quite saw it! Efforts at simplicity of explanation often cause the student to give himself away, as, when one described Morton's fork as an "allusion to the fork on the gaming-table, which they used to scrape up the money with."

There is sometimes too much clearness in the idea, but wrongness in the fact. In distinguishing between a free breakfast-table and a breakfast for nothing (a question in a Political Economy Examination), I received the answer: "A free breakfast-table means that you are not obliged to pay for the table, but you must pay for the breakfast"—a Utopian arrangement belonging only to the realm of the pupil's imagination.

The difficulties of thorough teaching come out in an examination—which is, indeed, an object-lesson on the difficulties of communication of ideas. Political Economy is a crucial test of the capacity of the teacher. Take the following answer from the paper of a pupil of an excellent teacher. It is an instance of the student labouring up to an idea, but not reaching the sticking-place. It is on the subject of Economic Rent.

"In England the landlord often asks below the economic rent for his land, either from friendly feeling between the landlord and tenant, or the tenants have been on the land through many families; but in Ireland the landlords often ask more, and the tenants will pay it, even if it is through presents from relations. In America, they just ask this rent (economic rent), no more, no less." You hear the teacher at work, and see the look of intelligence on the pupil's face. But, alack, "There is no art to read the mind's construction in the face." The centre is being lost, and all its radii and circumference are carefully retained.

How to screw up the strings of the human instrument to their sticking-place, so that when played upon by the examiner only harmonious musical notes shall strike forth, is not merely an artistic enterprise but a herculean labour. Well has Professor W. H. H. Hudson said: "Examinations are good if we do not prepare for them." Yet, even after special preparation, mistakes and failures such as those I am describing take place. What then would be the limit to the ludicrous, if all acted on Professor Hudson's suggestion?

Special definite terms are the examiner's delight, for he can definitely mark them. Unfortunately, they are the candidate's abhorrence. He loves to expatiate on the general, the vague; to write, as he calls it, "a long jaw."

Ask the question, "What is meant by the statute of Præmunire?" The candidate cannot easily wriggle out of his either knowledge or non-knowledge. Here is a shot. "This required all servants to give notice before leaving places." Again, "The statute of Præmunire, passed in the reign of Edward IV., enacted that free trade should exist between France and England, and that Edward should marry Margaret." A large order, indeed!

Or take a question about "Impeachment." "It is an accusation," says one, "brought by the House of Lords against a member of the House of Commons; the House of Lords tries the person, and the House of Commons gives the verdict." A remarkable division of labour! Another candidate writes: "When a person is accused of high treason, and the judges have decided, before they have tried the man, to pronounce him guilty." This candidate is a believer in the works of supererogation, and adds: "You do not ask for an instance in our period, so I shall give the instance of Sir Philip Sydney, in the time of Charles II. There is a very good account of it in Edna Lyall's In the Golden Days. Sir Sydney was charged with treason, tried, condemned, and beheaded on Tower Hill." "Impeachment," says another, "means that, supposing any man should be suspected of treason, and the suspicion holds good, that man is impeached with his crime, or, in other words, is informed that he is suspected, and is to be arrested.

"Impeachment," to quote again, "is the art of depriving a person of the right to the laws of the country, leaving him destitute and at the mercy of his enemies. [For instance] Archbishop Sharp was drawn from his carriage, and murdered before his daughter's eyes." The following is still more

hopelessly confused: "Edward III., when out of this country, accused Stratford (? Strafford), Archbishop of Canterbury, of wilfully wasting his money, and ordered him to appear before the Court of the Exchequer; but the Lords refused, saying that a man ought to be tried by his equals. To this, Edward consented."

"Who were the Lollards?" is a definite question, which, from the examiner's point of view, can be marked with some amount of exactness. Here is more scope for candidates. Yet this is the use some make of it:

One says: "The Lollards were a kind of committee chosen to see that the King ruled the country justly." Another, with some glimmering of a reminiscence, observes: "The Lollards were very great musicians"; and, overcome by the brilliancy of this idea, declines to venture a second sentence on the subject.

These definite questions, the examiners' delight, may easily become too technical—and it is only fair that candidates should have some questions which give them "scope."

Of "scope" questions in history, a favourite one is the life of Sir Walter Raleigh. There is no boy—and but few girls—ignorant of the fact that Sir Walter introduced tobacco into England. Knowledge in this case may, with the boys, be a lively sense of pleasures to come. Sometimes the potato takes root in the mind also; but it is not so certain as the tobacco. It is not easy to see why the fact of the tobacco-introduction hardly ever filters through the mind of even the youngest pupil. One candidate, indeed, is not precise in statement: "Sir Walter Raleigh brought into England several new and useful plants."

Any further knowledge is by no means universal. The cloak incident is, of course, well known.

But the most remarkable account of Sir Walter I ever read was the following: "Sir Walter Raleigh was a very great man. He went over and discovered America; and when he had discovered America he discovered Virginia; he discovered the potato. And when he had discovered the potato, he discovered tobacco. And when he had discovered tobacco, he turned to his companious, and said: 'My friends, be of good cheer, for we have this day, in England, lit such a flame as I trust, by God's grace, shall never be extinguished.'"

Spring Song.





CHAPTER XX.

"WHEN A' THE LAVE ARE SLEEPIN'."

"

AN ye no bide twa minutes at the wheel,
Meg?" exclaimed old dame Hardy, in
querulous tones, as, for the tenth time, her granddaughter quitted her spinning to gaze out of the
window overlooking the sea.

"I'm lookin' for the *Petrel*, granny," was Meg's response, as she returned to her oft-interrupted task with a smothered sigh.

"Did ye no hear yer faither say she couldna be here till early mornin'?" retorted the crone, fixing her eagle eyes on the girl's face, which had undergone a striking change during the past few months. The bloom had faded from the once round, dimpled cheeks; the blue eyes had lost their sealustre; and the full red lips no longer curled with laughter or pouted in saucy spleen. A look of care and sadness had replaced the mirthful glee which made the countenance so bright and attractive once. The youthful grace of her figure was gone; indeed, it was hard to recognise even a trace of it in the slouching gait and laggard step, which betrayed all too plainly the lassitude of the mind, whose former buoyancy had fled for ever.

No less was her manner altered for the worse. Its wonted sprightliness had given place to a subdued, almost craven quietness, very different indeed from its old vivacity. At times it indicated a feverish restlessness, however, as to-night, which arrested attention by its sheer contrast to the languor she generally displayed. This latent excitement would communicate itself to her face as well,

kindling a burning radiance in her eye, and suffusing her cheek with a bright red flush; symptoms too obvious to escape notice, especially the notice of so shrewd an observer as old dame Hardy, who instantly surmised that something of more importance than the *Petrel's* appearance had occasioned them.

Nor was she surprised when, not long afterwards, the girl finally quitted the spinning-wheel, and, throwing a plaid over her head, prepared to go out into the gathering darkness.

"Whaur are ye gaun tae noo?" she inquired in tones that plainly evinced a knowledge of the answer before it was given.

"To the beach," said Meg. "They'll hae need o' me the nicht, I reckon, to gie them timely warnin'. If it hadna been for me, they micht hae been in Lynnburgh jile last Monday nicht; an' I maun be on the spot this time."

She glanced at the Dutch clock, whose hands pointed to half-past eleven, as she said those words, and, without waiting to hear the remonstrance she knew was on her grandmother's lips, hurried out towards her destination.

The day had been sultry and oppressive, nor did the evening bring coolness. Far away in the west, where the sun had gone down, a lurid glare still flickered ominously, and among the heavy masses of cloud lambent flashes of fire could be discerned at intervals, revealing in transient distinctness the grey sea beneath. Not a breath of wind was stirring, and yet, ever and anon, the boom of the wave resounded along the shore with a sullen, menacing sound, as if in prelude to the coming storm. But Meg hardly noticed these things; perhaps she was dimly conscious, nevertheless, of a subtle sympathy between her own heart and the great heart of Nature, throbbing now, as it seemed, with the pulses of a suppressed tempest, which must sooner or later burst forth.

On she sped to the brow of a precipitous cliff, where the whole sweep of the coast-line could be seen. Her practised eye travelled over the winding beach, on which, even amid the deepening gloom, she could have detected a figure approaching; but the solitude was undisturbed by any living thing save the sea-birds which occasionally glided across the waves, then vanished into obscurity.

Assured by this, she clambered down by projecting rocks to the shore, where she began to pace slowly to and fro, only pausing when she reached the horn of the semicircular bay, to peer along the coast-line for the advancing figure she expected to see very shortly.

But the hour appointed passed without bringing him she waited for, and again the chill of despair crept over her sinking heart. It was in vain she sent her wild imploring glances through the shadows of the night: the object of their quest never appeared. And at last, in bitter disappointment, she threw herself down on the sand, and gave way to a fit of passionate weeping.

So vehemently she wept, that she never heard the sound of approaching footsteps until they were close at hand. Then, starting quickly to her feet, she dashed away her tears, and went to meet the intruders, whom she had recognised by their voices to be her father and brothers.

But, as they advanced, she distinguished a fourth figure with them, and her heart gave a great leap when she saw that it was Norman Lesly. Why had he come by the other way, after expressly appointing this one as that by which he was to come and meet her?

No opportunity, however, was given her of receiving any answer to this question, for they were too much excited in discussing their critical circumstances to take notice of her at all. They merely asked her if she had seen any one about the beach, and, satisfied on that point, proceeded to deliberate as to the safest course they should adopt in disposing of the goods expected by the *Petrel* that night.

"We must make a change," said Lesly. "It's

quite evident they have scented out the secret thus far, that they know what part of the beach our friends land at; and once they pounce down on us, you know what to expect. I have been thinking of another warehouse for our goods; what say you to Raxley Castle along there?"

"Raxley Castle?" re-echoed Bill Hardy in very dubious tones; "that's an unco uncanny place."

Lesly burst into one of his cold, sarcastic laughs. "I suppose you're afraid the devil gets hold of you there?" he said, turning from the stalwart figure before him to the distant crags on which the

ruins stood.

"Maybe he wad be keener o' your company than o' mine," was the equally sarcastic rejoinder, spoken in significant accents, which jarred unpleasantly on Mr. Lesly's ears.

"We'll transfer our goods there to-night," said he.
"Your boat will hold all that is in the cave, Hardy; and you and Ned can bring them round to the rocks just below the Castle. I'll go there now and get the place in readiness."

"Ye suirly dinna ken muckle aboot it," objected Bill Hardy. "The rock the Castle stands on is a'maist a clean precipice; an' hoo can we get a' thae heavy bales hoisted so high?"

"There are such things as ropes, I presume," was the answer; "and, besides, I know a circuitous path to the ruins, partly underground, which makes it doubly safe. Have you any other objection?"

"I have jist this to say, that if the place we have our goods in noo is no safe, Raxley Castle's no likely to be ony safer. It's an exposed sitiation, an' mair liable to be ta'en by surprise than the beach."

"Rubbish! It's simply your superstition that makes you averse to the place. I verily believe you subscribe to all the nonsensical stories the people here tell about the ghosts who haunt it. And, by the way, it strikes me that is an additional recommendation, for nobody will go near the place at any time, least of all at night, when our visits will chiefly be paid. And if his Satanic Majesty should please to meet us on some occasion, send for me, Hardy, and I'll entertain him. Now, let us make haste. It wants an hour yet of the time the Petrel was to sight us, and we can get the goods transferred before then. Nicholas can keep a look out for us. Meg, you needn't wait any longer; it might create suspicion should you by any chance

be seen here at this time of night. You'd better run away home."

"Since she's oot onyway, she'd better bide," dissented Bill Hardy; "we'll need a' hands gin this wark has to be done, an' Nick maun come wi' me an' Ned."

"Ay, let me watch, I've gude een," said the girl. "Ye a' had cause to ken that last Monday nicht."

"Faith ay," said Ned. "If your een hadna been sae gude, nane o' us wad hae been here the nicht, I trow. We'll lippen to ye, Meg, ance mair."

"I reckon we'll hae to lippen to her lugs mair than to her een," said the old fisherman, glancing up into the sky, which had grown black, and seemed to quiver with the electric fluid, while heavy drops of rain began to fall from the dense clouds overhead.

"We'll have a storm, I think," said Lesly. "Don't let us put off any more time. I'll expect you in less than an hour, remember."

And with these words he strode off, leaving the others to execute his orders.

Meg watched them depart to the right and left, but it was the figure of Lesly her eyes followed through the gloom until it disappeared. Then she began to walk restlessly about, her pace accelerated every minute until it became almost a race, and she found herself well on her way to those high, beetling crags on which stood Raxley Castle.

The stately ruin was perched on a projecting peak, its crumbling walls rising majestically from the very edge of the precipice it surmounted, and frowning down in solitary grandeur on the sea below. It had been a stronghold in ancient times, when the most inaccessible sites were chosen by rival feudal chiefs for their dwellings. Only by that one abrupt path of which Lesly had spoken could it be reached at all, and then only by expert climbers, who must have had some cogent reason for making such an attempt. For, as already intimated, ghostly associations served to keep people at a distance from the ruins, a circumstance peculiarly favourable to the purposes of the smugglers, who might thus count upon transacting their business undisturbed.

This path, however, was well known to the smuggler's daughter, who had climbed it many a time with her brothers; and if her steps were uncertain now as she began its ascent, it was not

through fear. No; at that moment the purpose which animated her would have nerved her to undertake a more perilous exploit. Had there been no other way to that dark pile, within which was concealed the man to whom she had surrendered her all, she would have scaled the very face of the rock rather than abandon the hope to which she clung.

Up she clambered from rock to rock, heedless of danger, hardly conscious of the deluging rain and the lurid glare of the lightning, which illuminated with transient splendour the broken arches and windows of the castle. Not once did she pause until she gained the summit, over which the fury of the tempest seemed then to burst. The hollow rumbling of the thunder echoed weirdly among the ruins, which it seemed to shake, while every pillar, with its minute frieze work, every tottering arch, nay, every stone, stood out in strong relief against the flood of blue light which was shed at frequent intervals from the surcharged clouds overhead.

It was a scene of awful grandenr—that grim, majestic pile, poised on the sheer edge of a giddy height, at whose base the sea dashed itself in sullen menace, while all around rose black, jagged peaks, lit with the lightning's glare. Few could have beheld it undismayed, yet for the lonely girl standing shelterless amid its dangers it possessed no terrors: greater, ay immeasurably greater than all the commotion of nature, was the commotion of her own heart in that hour, which was to decide her fate for weal or woe.

Between the peals of thunder she strained her ear to listen for lesser sounds within the castle walls, and her quickened senses soon detected what she sought. Following the direction whence proceeded the noise of rolling stones, she speedily caught sight of a faint glimmer far in the interior of the rnins, where were the old dungeons, prisons in bygone days. Towards these she took her way as best she could over the masses of fallen masonry, sometimes displacing a loose stone, which rattled down with echoing sound among the vaulted passages.

Suddenly she lost sight of the beacon light, and the sounds from the dungeons ceased. He must have heard her approach, she reasoned, and, mistaking her for some unwelcome intruder, had taken alarm, and was now concealing himself. "Norman, Norman, it's me!" she called out; but a reverberating peal of thunder drowned her voice.

When it had passed, she repeated the call, and waited in breathless suspense for some reply.

Again the dim flicker showed itself not far off, and she heard someone advancing. It was he; and now that she was so near him, her heart began to beat wild and fast.

"Meg, in Heaven's name, what brings you here?" he exclaimed in stern, almost threatening tones, as he confronted the trembling girl.

"Oh! Norman, dinna speak sae harsh," she said entreatingly. "Ye ken weel what has brocht me here—jist what has brocht me many a time afore to meet ye. I was waitin' for ye on the beach at the time ye was to meet me there: why did ye no come?"

"I was prevented, and you might have known the reason," he answered coldly, and holding himself aloof from her. "If the risk is great for your father and brothers, it's a vast deal greater for me, you must remember. It was foolish in you to desert your post and come up here."

Although trembling from head to foot, the girl met his angry glance unflinchingly as she replied:

"Ye didna think it foolish ance in a day when I cam' to meet ye, Norman Lesly. Dinna look fierce at me noo-noo that I hae parted wi' a' that woman holds dear for your sake. Ay, it's true; bad as I am, I was pure till I saw you. And, oh! Norman, hae pity on me noo that ye hae brocht me sae low! Ye promised to mak' me your wife some day, oh, keep your word noo, and save me frae disgrace. I loe ye weel-mair than my ain sel', an' I'm willin' to thole reproach or onything for yer sake, if only ye'll be true to me. It's a' I ask; an' I'll forget a' yer unkindness thae months past, Norman: there's naething I winna do to please ye, if only ye'll save me frae disgrace, an' be true to your word. Ye'll no refuse? Oh! ye canna refuse, dear Norman. Gie me yer hand, as ye used to do, an' say ye'll be true."

She had crept close to his side, and tried to gain possession of the hand she sought; but he receded a step, and regarded her with an expression so utterly heartless, so cold and relentless, that the tears in those pleading, upturned eyes froze "in their briny bed," and the throbbing heart seemed to petrify. She gazed at him with mute terror, for

she saw something in his face that appalled her—it was aversion, almost loathing.

He spoke, and every word fell upon her heart like molten lead.

"This is sheer nonsense," he said. "I am willing to make amends for my folly as far as I can, but—"

He stopped, arrested by the flash from Meg's eyes as, recoiling from him, she cried:

"Dare ye ca' yer troth-plight folly? Didna ye vow to mak' me yer wife when first I listened to yer fair words? Isna this ring yer ain pledge o' fealty to me?"

"Speak lower, will you, unless you wish to be discovered," was Lesly's rejoinder, spoken in the same cold, unmoved tones. "I repeat, I am willing to make you all the reparation possible; but if you expect me to hold myself bound by a word spoken in a moment of passion, you must prepare for disappointment. You knew very well I never meant what I said; and if your virtue had been as dear to you as you say, you never would have parted with it on any such pretext. To make you my wife would ruin my prospects, and—"

"Fause-hearted villain!" exclaimed the half-maddened girl. "You that vowed by a' that's sacred to mak' me yer wedded wife, an' worked my ruin wi' that vow—you can talk to me o' your prospects, noo that ye hae robbed me o' my gude name! What reparation can ye mak' me for that?"

Her voice broke, and a cry of anguish burst from her lips; then, throwing herself at his feet, she cried in imploring accents:

"Oh, it canna be! Norman, hae pity!"

"Rise, girl," he commanded in a harsh, angry voice, as if impatient of her presence. "I tell you it is impossible. Name any sum you like, and I'll give it you; but——"

She rose and stood before him, her eyes flashing fire, and her face blanched to a deadly whiteness.

"Then hear me, Norman Lesly," she said in low menacing tones, which passion made unnaturally calm. "Ye hae wrought my ruin; I will work yours. Ye hae refused me mercy when I prayed at your feet; but as sure as there's a heaven abune, my vengeance will follow ye."

He saw the terrible look on her face for an instant, in the glare of lightning that flashed

athwart the ruins: when it vanished, she had vanished with it, and he breathed more freely now that she was gone. Had she fallen over the precipice into the sea, he would have experienced a deeper sense of relief. The voice of conscience had been too long silenced to make itself heard now. For it is a mistake to suppose that evil-doers are disturbed in the execution of their designs by this inward monitor. The moral sense perishes with morality, in some cases so completely that the culprit cannot believe that he *is* a transgressor. To deny the claims of the laws he has broken is the next and natural step; thus sin is the parent of infidelity.

"Marry her," he said to himself, "not very likely. I have other intentions, and she will be glad enough to take the money by-and-bye; or, if she doesn't, her father will, which amounts to the same thing."

With these noble reflections he went out to see whether the Stermy Petrel were in sight. It was, and at the same time he could distinguish Hardy's boat shooting across the bay in his direction. He went down to meet it, casting an inquisitive glance now and then about him, lest Meg should make her appearance again. For, remembering her previous devotion to him, he could not yet believe she was in earnest in quitting him now.

But she was nowhere to be seen, and he patrolled the shore, within the shadow of the high cliffs, until Hardy and his sons arrived.

When by dexterous management they had safely conveyed their goods to the subterranean dungeons within the old ruins, Bill Hardy proposed to go out and meet the boats of the *Petrel* as a less hazardous course, especially while the sea was so glassy and calm. To this proposal Lesly assented, enjoining at the same time that Hardy should carry the expected goods right round to the other side of the bay and transfer them directly to his own cottage, as they were light, and too precious to be entrusted even for one night to their new storehouse. He would await them under the crags at the usual landing-place.

These arrangements were forthwith carried out.

But as the old fisherman was stepping into his boat, he abruptly stopped and, peering into the darkness, asked:

"Whaur's Meg?"

"Oh, she went home a few minutes ago," answered Lesly; "I sent her."

No; she had not gone home. At that moment she was lying on the sands writhing in agony. She had no wish left her but to die; and as she saw that deep, still ocean heaving at her feet, a wild resolve sprang into her mind, and she started up. She knew where a sheer rock rose above a bottomless abyss, in which the eddying waves foamed incessantly: one plunge into it, and her misery would be ended.

Not pausing a moment, she flew toward this place. When she reached it, she threw off her plaid, and stood silently gazing down upon the gurgling whirlpool. How black it looked as the lightning quivered over it! Her eye seemed fascinated, and insensibly she drew nearer, until her foot rested on the very edge of the rock.

What was it that made her suddenly recoil, and raise both hands and eyes to heaven above, in which, through rifts in the dense clouds, could be seen the quiet stars keeping sentinel there? Was it the dread of that "something after death," of whose existence those stars reminded her? No: it was the thirst for vengeance aroused with the speed of thought, and superseding in its intensity even the desire to be rid of pain. Not yet would she throw life away; not till he who had accomplished her destruction and betraved her trust had been requited as was meet. She knew instinctively she had been forsaken for a newer, more captivating rival, and, to execute her revenge, she must discover who this rival was. This was the one dominant craving of her soul, until the satisfaction of which rest was impossible, and all else but meaningless shadows.

All through the weary hours of that night, when the other inmates of the cottage were asleep, and only the moaning of the wind broke its deep silence, poor Meg sat crouching on the floor of her room, her head buried between her knees, her long flowing hair sweeping the ground, as scheme after scheme passed rapidly through her mind for the execution of her purpose. The tears had ceased to flow; her lips were firmly pressed together; her hands were tightly clutching her knees; and every feature expressed the intensity of the resolve burning within her bosom. The love, so long tenanted there, had turned to hate, fierce, insatiable—a hatred which would terminate only in revenge or death.

CHAPTER XXI.

MEG'S REVENGE.

"But is it imperative that I should go?"

"Well, there's the letter; you can read it for yourself, Errol. He seems to think there's no time to be lost; and, circumstanced as I am at present, it's quite impossible for me to get away. You were willing enough to go last time; I don't see why you should object to go now."

There was covert sarcasm in these words that jarred unpleasantly on the ears of Kenneth Errol, awakening the suspicion that his secret was in possession of this man, who seemed able to probe his innermost thoughts. Lesly had never intimated any acquaintance with the issue of his engagement to the baronet's daughter; yet Kenneth vaguely surmised that he knew of it. And. strange to say, there was no one from whom he would more have desired to conceal it.

"The journey is very inconvenient for me at this time," he answered, appearing not to notice his friend's innuendo. "It will occupy at least three days—a much longer period than I can afford to expend on such a purpose. I don't see any necessity for it. Skinner himself appeared quite satisfied, when he was here, that nothing more can be done at present; and it surprises me that he should wish to see me so soon again."

"Well, you know him as well as I do; and I would advise you not to thwart him," said Lesly. turning round to his desk and opening the ledger on it. "He's nettled about these complaints the Government have made to him, and any appearance of slackness on our side won't improve him. I'm sorry for it, Errol, but really you must comply."

"And I suppose I must start this afternoon?"

"Yes; the sooner the better. I confess I can more easily reconcile myself to this sacrifice on your part than to another of his intermeddling, poking visits here; and if your going keeps him away, it's a general boon you're conferring."

This view of the projected journey did not seem to reconcile Kenneth to it any the more. Very ungraciously he submitted to the inevitable, and began making preparations. Lesly saw him write two notes, one of which he despatched by a younger clerk to Cliff Cottage, while he placed the

other in an inner pocket, intending evidently to post it himself.

Had he been less absorbed by his own unpleasant thoughts, he must have noticed the secret satisfaction depicted in unguarded moments on Mr. Lesly's face, whose incessant leer, as before observed, did duty equally for a smile or a sneer, but which to-day partook decidedly of the latter expression, as the hour for Kenneth's departure drew near. Indeed, when he saw him close and lock his desk, and heard him address a few parting words of direction to the other young men in the office, he could hardly disguise his real sentiments, the more so as he remarked Kenneth's impatience of the mock consolations he thought fit to administer on bidding him good-bye.

The opportunity long waited for had come, through his own ingenuity, and Lesly was determined to turn it to the best account.

That same evening he left the village by the last coach for Lynnburgh, which he reached about eight o'clock, and took his way to the theatre.

In passing along the street, a playbill caught his eye, on which, in staring capitals, was printed the word "Macbeth."

"I'll have to wait till it's over," he said to himself. "I wish it had been a comedy; there would have been some chance of seeing her between the acts."

However, he entered by the stage-door, and, while looking for the call-boy to carry his note to Miss Ormond, the actress herself met his view. She was standing at one of the wings, smearing her hands with the red paint which was to represent the blood of the slaughtered Duncan.

He dared not advance, for she wore that inspired look he had learned to understand as something which must keep aloof her most intimate friends; so he was obliged to content himself with watching her from a distance, but with kindling admiration. Her very fierceness charmed him: the woman possessed of such a spirit presented peculiar attractions for a nature such as his, which despised above all things weakness in whatever form, and delighted in strength that could cope with his own. Here was one whom it would be a triumph indeed to subdue; and this triumph he was resolved to accomplish.

He had not yet received any reply to his note, which had been put into her hands, and lest he should miss it when it did come, he preferred to remain at the wings, where several of the actors, whose acquaintance he had made at the inn, held brief dialogues with him during their exits from the stage. They knew well enough what he was waiting for; but Miss Ormond's popularity was too habitual to occasion them to take special notice of his admiration of her, and they were too wary to endanger their chances of good-fellowship by any allusions to the fact more pointed than might be agreeable.

When the tragedy was drawing to a close, and all the people in the theatre hushed their breath, this spectator, the most enthusiastic of all who witnessed the scene, placed himself near the wing which she must pass in leaving the stage, so as to attract her attention, and remind her of his request for an interview that night.

But the trance-like expression her face had worn on the stage was still there, and she did not notice him at all. Indeed, she appeared so utterly spent, that an attendant placed a chair beside her, and she sank upon it, breathing short and fast.

Some minutes elapsed before she recovered sufficiently to respond to the call made for her reappearance before the footlights, where the usual adulation of an admiring audience awaited her.

Not until her return did she observe Mr. Lesly, who had placed himself in such a position that she could not fail to do so.

"Good evening, Mr. Lesly," said she, intending to pass by; but he stood before her, asking in bland, persuasive tones:

"When can I see you? You received my note, I suppose?"

"I did get a note from someone, but have not had time to look at it," she replied, with perceptible nonchalance. "I shall be leaving the theatre shortly, and shall be happy to have your escort home, or rather to the inn, for home I have none." She abruptly quitted him, and passed on to her dressing room.

More than half-an-hour elapsed before she emerged from it. Her step betrayed extreme exhaustion, and he hastened to offer the assistance of his arm, which, however, she gracefully declined, and went straight to the stage-door. There she paused only for a moment to draw her cloak and hood closer about her, in doing which Mr. Lesly politely lent his aid, whispering some

compliment at the same time, at which she merely laughed.

It was scarcely dark, for the days were fast approaching their maximum length; and several people, observing the well-known form of the actress, stopped to gaze after her—a species of notoriety to which she had a strong antipathy. One or two seemed even to follow her until she reached her destination, when she halted for a few minutes to exchange some remarks with her companion, who was speaking with marked earnestness, and was evidently unwilling to let her go. He retained in his grasp the hand she had extended to him, and continued to urge his plea, whatever it was, until, forcibly withdrawing herself, the actress waved him adieu, and disappeared within the inn.

"To-morrow I will see you again," were Mr. Lesly's last words as, with a low bow, he turned away homewards.

But they were heard by other ears than those for which they were intended.

Scarcely had he gone when a woman's figure, which had dogged their steps from the door of the theatre, stole out from the shadow, and crept stealthily after him for some hundred paces, then stopped short and fled hastily away.

That same figure was on its way to the theatre the following night; and on reaching the stagedoor she knocked and requested to be allowed to speak for a few moments with Miss Ormond. Her intense eagerness touched the heart of the attendant, who had at first rudely repulsed her, until he saw the wild, imploring look on her face, and the tears gathering in her eyes.

"But what do you want with her?" he asked.

"Oh, dinna speer at me what I want," returned poor Meg; "but jist say it's some ane frae Glenathole wi' a message for her. See," she added, diving into her pocket and fetching out a piece of money, "I haena muckle siller, but ye're welcome to that, if ye'll tak' me tae her."

What door, obdurate soever though it be, will not the golden key open?

The man bade her follow him, and after a brief colloquy near the actress's dressing-room, motioned her to enter.

But poor Meg trembled so, that she paused on the threshold, gazing with mingled fear and bewilderment on the odd scene before her, and did not advance a step until that deep thrilling voice she had heard the night before said, "My good woman, what do you want with me?"

The girl's eyes had wandered from the littered apartment, with its motley array of fantastic robes and stage disguises, to the beautiful face of the actress herself, who, in turn, was surveying her quaintly-dressed visitor with an expression of amused perplexity.

Encouraged by the unaffected kindness of the tone in which those words were uttered, and apparently satisfied with her scrutiny of the face now bent toward her, Meg advanced, with her plaid tightly gathered round her, as though she were treading dangerous ground.

"I've come frae Glenathole, ma'am." began she, her blue eyes reverting once more to the actress's face, whose expression was more reassuring every time she looked at it. "I've come to warn ye o' danger," she continued, her breath coming faster, as she saw the startled look on Miss Ormond's face at these last words.

"Danger!" echoed the actress. "What do you mean?"

"The warst o' a' dangers, leddy," answered Meg, greedily scanning the expressive features before her. Then, with an abruptness and fervour more striking than any dramatic counterfeits ever exhibited on the stage with which Beatrice Ormond was so familiar, the injured girl told her sad story.

In undisguised astonishment Miss Ormond listened. That the girl was speaking the truth she could not doubt: her distress, reflected in every gesture and mournful intonation, proved it all too clearly; but how had she come to know that her betrayer was acquainted with herself? Might she not have mistaken Mr. Lesly for another?

To solve this doubt, she inquired:

"Was it when I was leaving the theatre last night, that you saw me?"

"Yes, mem," replied Meg. "I saw ye gang awa frae here, doon the street to the inn, and he was wi'ye."

"Will you be good enough to tell me his name?" next questioned the actress.

"Weel I ken it, leddy—Norman Lesly," was the unhesitating answer as the poor, forsaken girl raised her blue eyes to the dark ones searching her face.

"Pardon me; I wanted to make sure; yours is

such a pitiable story," returned Miss Ormond. "Pray be seated, you look tired, and tell me how you came to know that he was seeking my acquaintance."

"I saw that he wasna the same's he used to be. an' I kent something had changed him." responded Meg, sinking on the chair Beatrice placed for her. and speaking with difficulty under the reaction of feeling caused by those sympathetic words. "He ave tried to keep awa frae me ony time he was wi' my faither, an' he cam' seldomer and seldomer, till I saw that something was takin' him sae often to the toon. An', after he threw me aff to hide my shame as best I could, I vowed I wad be revenged. Sae I watched him ae nicht, an' followed him here, an' last nicht I saw him walkin' hame wi' ve frae this place. That's hoo I cam' to ken about it. An' though I wanted to wreak vengeance on him. I'm mair anxious to save ye frae his wiles noo that I see ye sae kind an' leal-he'rted. For oh, I couldna wish ye a waur fate than to be deceived as I hae been."

"Poor girl! I pity you; and I thank you warmly for telling me this," said Beatrice, moved by the unaffected simplicity and deep sorrow of her visitor. "I wish I could do anything to help you, but I fear yours is a misfortune beyond redress. However, you may be sure I will not be the victim of Mr. Lesly's machinations. I never felt well-disposed toward him; and, now that I know him to be such a villain, I regret having ever admitted him to my acquaintance. I would not have done so but for—"

She hesitated as an uneasy thought sprang up into her mind regarding one, dear to her as life, who seemed somehow in the power of this unscrupulous man. Did Kenneth not know his real character? Surely not, else he must have cast him off, as this outraged dupe of his had done. She determined to recount to him all that had been told her of his cold-hearted brutality.

Meanwhile, to cover her hesitation, she rose, saying:

"Tell me, what is your name? for it is necessary that I should know it."

"Meg Hardy, mem," replied the girl.

"Hardy? I will remember it. And now, tell me, are you in need? For, if so, I can help you a little."

"Na, na, leddy; ye've been ower kind as it is.

My faither winna see me want, though he's no what he sude be."

"Are you aware that you can prosecute that scoundrel, and compel him to support you, if he really promised you marriage?" inquired Beatrice, as the thought suddenly occurred to her.

"Ay; but I wad rather starve forty times ower than tak' a sixpence frae him," was the proud rejoinder as Meg rose to depart, drawing her plaid about her, and throwing back her head in an attitude of perfect disdain that won the actress's admiration.

"Give me your hand," she said impulsively. "If any doubt had remained in my mind as to the truth of your story, it must have vanished now. I admire your spirit of independence. Like you, I would scorn to accept any substitute for love itself—ay, or a love that had anything false in it. Better for you, poor creature, if you——But I know what men are, and no wonder you were deceived. Now I must bid you good-bye; that bell reminds me I am late, and I have to be on the stage very shortly. But before you go, will you promise to apply to me if you should ever be in need?"

"I couldna hae the he'rt to say nay to sic a kind proposal," said Meg, raising her brimming eyes to the beautiful face, on which she knew so many thousands were gazing nightly. "But if we ne'er meet again, I hope ye'll aye believe that ye hae the best wishes o' a puir lassie, wha trusts ye'll ne'er ken what it is to hae a broken he'rt. Fare ye weel."

"Farewell," returned Beatrice; "may Heaven help you to better days."

Pressing a kiss on the white, shapely hand, poor Meg took her departure, and stumbled along as best she could among the chaos of stage machinery.

She was gazing about her in helpless bewilderment at the moving scenes and flaring lights, unable to find her way out of the labyrinth, or gain any clue from the workmen who were engaged in fitting up the stage for the evening's performance, when all of a sudden she started and pressed her side as though in pain.

What voice was that she heard?

A moment she gazed in its direction, rooted to the spot; then, with one bound she dived behind a great frame, in whose shelter she remained, gasping for breath, until the object of her terror should pass. But the man paused just within a few feet or her hiding-place, and she heard him speaking as plainly as though he had been at her side.

"So soon as that?" he said; "why, the theatre is as full now as it was at the first. Cannot you postpone the Liverpool engagement?"

"Impossible," replied the unknown interlocutor, who seemed to be the manager of the theatre: "the engagement is too important; we must fulfil it. Miss Ormond herself would never consent to retract her promise. We positively close on the twentieth of next month. It will be advertised in the bills on Monday. Better early, you know: the people will be the more anxious to make the most of the remaining nights. 'Farewell appearance of the unrivalled actress, Miss Beatrice Ormond!' It looks well, you see; and there's an immediate rush for places. All are not so highly privileged as yourself, Mr. Lesly. By-the-bye, I will take your note, as I have some directions to give Miss Ormond about the piece to-night, and am going to her room just now."

"I shall be obliged," responded Mr. Lesly. "There is no answer."

The manager hurried away.

Meg, with every pulse quickened to a painful degree, listened motionless to the steps of him whom she had so often in by-gone days welcomed with fond eagerness and joy, as he approached her place of concealment. What a change now! She could hardly breathe, as for an instant his face was revealed under a lamp in passing, lest by that mysterious instinct which often apprises us of some unwelcome or hostile presence, he should detect her hiding there. Not because she feared what he might then do: he was completely in her power; but because, now that she had executed her threat, the wished-for vengeance ceased to yield any satisfaction, and caused a feeling akin to self-contempt. Better that punishment should have come upon him from any other hand than hers, she thought: and she watched him move on in the direction from which she had so recently come, without the triumphant gladness that might have been expected in one who knew that he was about to receive the punishment of his perfidy.

Waiting until he was out of sight, Meg pursued her intricate way to the stage-door, which she reached hot and panting, and then made good her escape from the town, wondering if her increasing pain and weariness would allow her to get home that night.

Meanwhile the unconscious Lesly was impatiently awaiting the critical moment that was to decide his fate. Of Miss Ormond's real sentiments he was as yet ignorant. She had studiously concealed from him her partiality for Kenneth Errol, whose jealousy she, in capricious moments, had delighted to augment by flattering attentions to his rival; a course of procedure which not unnaturally had led him to entertain hopes of success. Nor was he much discouraged by her recent indifference and coldness, which he believed merely assumed as an incentive to his passion. He estimated women only by his own low standard, and, arguing success from previous victories, did not greatly fear discomfiture in this case.

To Kenneth Errol's infatuation he was no stranger; but he knew he could pay a higher price for the favour of Miss Ormond than he; and gold was the touchstone whereby he had long tested human love, as well as humanity in general. He hardly dreamt of finding an exception to his golden rule in the person of an actress.

Had he known the thoughts passing through her mind at that moment as, attired in her stage garments, she paused before the mirror to read his note, very different indeed would have been his own feelings. The supreme contempt depicted on her countenance when she had perused those flattering words, and crushed the paper in her hands before trampling it under foot, would have dashed his hopes effectually, and prepared him for what was coming.

But the impulse to yield to her natural indignation received a check in another consideration relative to Kenneth's interests. His warning as to Mr. Lesly's power to injure him recurred to her mind, and made her hesitate. She knew too little of her lover's business relations with this man to understand why he should be so desirous not to offend him; and it appeared strange that such a connection should involve restraints so galling as this must be. Yet, she reflected, if Kenneth meant to quit his present surroundings entirely at an early date, why should he scruple to renounce at once a man so unworthy of even the semblance of respect? Further deliberation on this subject convinced her that no considerations as to consequences would induce her lover to continue on terms of intimacy with one

capable of such infamy as the revelations just made to her by the poor wronged girl proved Lesly to be. And in the strength of this belief she went to meet him at the close of that evening's performance.

He greeted her with his usual bold flattery.

"Ah, ma charmante," said he, bowing low, "how shall the people of Lynnburgh survive your absence, if you really persist in your intention of leaving us? Can you not be induced to stay?"

"No, Mr. Lesly; a promise is in my estimation a binding thing, not an idle profession made only for selfish ends, to be kept or broken according as convenience requires," answered Beatrice, with a certain hauteur, which he perceived, but dip not understand, as was evident from his next remark.

"You are conscientious even to a fault," he said; "but I have a very special reason for wishing you to break an engagement for once. Let us get clear of these grimacing apes yonder, who seem resolved upon thrusting themselves in your way, before I tell you what me reason is. I wonder how you can endure to be persecuted by the overtures of conceited dandies like those. I am tempted to kick them for their impudence."

"If all such admirers were kicked out of my way, my profession would lose its chief drawback," was Miss Ormond's reply, spoken in tones peculiarly significant as, drawing her hood low down upon her brow, she passed from the theatre into the street attended by Mr. Lesly, who, adverting immediately to the subject which engrossed his thoughts, proceeded to declare his passion in language that out-did any stage heroics.

During the utterance of his rhapsody, the actress had walked steadily on, neither inclining nor averting her head, but sedulously screening her face from view, so that not one of its flashes of anger and scorn met his gaze. But, in reply to his last words, she, to his astonishment no less than to his delight, turned toward him with a proposal that they should diverge from the main street, and take a quiet path leading into the open country.

Overjoyed by this apparently easy surrender to his wishes, Lesly instantly complied, attempting, at the same time, to draw her arm within his own. To this, however, she promptly made objection, walking on in the same cool manner as before, as she proceeded to reply to this profession of genuine

"Then I am to understand this is an offer of marriage on your part?" inquired she.

"Certainly," he answered; "and of all I possess besides."

"And I am the first and only woman you have ever loved?"

"Have I not said so? And where could I ever again find such another as you are?"

"Then, should I consent, you are willing to marry me to-morrow in Glenathole, where your friends are, and own me as your wife before them all?"

Her eyes, fixed searchingly on his face, detected the slight start of surprise occasioned by these unexpected words, and the embarrassment which for a moment he betrayed ere his ingenuity could devise an answer to so pointed a question.

"It would be my proudest boast to own you before all the world," he said at length; "though there might be no necessity for the marriage taking place in Glenathole. Why should you specify it in preference to other places?"

"Because, your friends being there, the celebration of our marriage among them would be a pledge that you were not afraid to own me as your lawful wife. In fact, so sensitive am I on this point, that I should make it a condition of our marriage that it should take place at Glenathole."

"But surely it is premature to talk of such a trifle, dearest Beatrice, until you have really promised to be mine."

"Nay; as I said, this must be the condition on which I do so. What is your objection to it?"

"Our being married at Glenathole?"

"Yes."

"Why, none. I have no objection in the world. What makes you suppose so?"

"There is no one in the place from whom you would wish to conceal your marriage with me? No one who could make any valid objection to it?"

Again her piercing eyes were on his face; again the covert look of fear crossed it as, avoiding her glance, he replied:

"Certainly not. Why should you imagine such a thing?"

"Not even a certain fair-haired girl of the name of Hardy?"

At the mention of that name the audacious villain started as if he had been arrested by an iron grip. He darted one quick, scrutinising glance at the face turned unflinchingly toward him, whose expression of mingled scorn and triumph told him. beyond all mistake, that his secret was fully known to her. But how had she come to the knowledge of it? In his baffled rage at so unexpected a defeat, his suspicion instantly reverted to his rival; but Kenneth, he knew, was in perfect ignorance of his intrigue with the fisherman's daughter, so could not have been his betrayer. There was only one who could have had any interest in thus exposing him, and, as he recalled Meg's parting threat of vengeance, a glare of fierce hate shot from his eyes. and distorted his visage to such an extent, that Beatrice felt herself in the presence of a demon from whom the mask had been suddenly torn. There was no shame, nor any semblance of contrition in his demeanour, now that he knew his infamy was disclosed to her whose ruin he had meditated; nothing but disappointed rage and a thirst for vengeance on the instrument of his exposure.

"May I inquire to whom you are indebted for this interesting information?" he had the effrontery to ask.

"No; suffice it that your perfidy is thoroughly known to me, and that no language can express the loathing I feel for the man who could betray a too credulous girl, and leave her to suffer the consequences of the shame he brought upon her. You imagined you could deceive me as easily: but, even without this revelation of your character, you could by no means have succeeded, as I have long rated the admiration of men at its true worth, and was not misled by yours. If you would have me change my opinion of you in any degree, go back to that poor girl you have betrayed, and make her the only amends in your power by fulfilling your promise of marriage. When you have done this, then, and not till then, will it be possible for me to pardon the insult you have offered me to-night."

With these words Beatrice Ormond was about to quit his presence, when he stepped before her, and, in a manner disgustingly familiar, said:

"I suppose, had it been Kenneth Errol who offered you the same insult, there would not have been the same difficulty in complying?"

The lightning flashed from the woman's dark eyes, and her figure seemed to expand with the burning indignation excited by this dastardly taunt, as she proudly, defiantly asked:

"How dare you address such words to me? Let me pass. I will not hear his name profaned by lips so vile as yours. Let me pass, I say."

"One word, madam, with your leave," he replied, planting himself right in front of her, and sneering until his face grew almost demoniacal. "You have objected to me on the ground of a former fancy for a low-born wench, who was about as chaste as the rest of her sex, begging your pardon: are you aware that he who seems to have won your fancy, Mr. Kenneth Errol, I mean, is the affianced husband of Sir Edward Douglas's eldest daughter, and that she is dying of a broken heart because he has forsaken her for you?"

The barbed arrow had found its mark this time. He gloated over the sight of her unspoken agony as these words fell upon her ears, distilling their deadly poison through her quivering bosom, and arresting the pulses of that warm, loving heart.

It was several minutes before she recovered sufficiently from the shock inflicted by this unlookedfor, undreamt-of blow, to say in faltering accents:

"It is a base slander, framed to injure one whom you hate because he is so immeasurably better than yourself. I will not—I do not believe one word of it. Perjurer! stand aside, I command you, and let me escape from your pernicious presence. I feel as if hell had opened at my feet, and disgorged you from its lowest depths."

"I appreciate the compliment," he answered, sneering more offensively than before, and standing aside to let her pass. "Only, when next you meet your immaculate lover, don't forget to ask him when he paid his last visit to Douglas Castle, and how Miss Douglas received him."

Like the sting of a viper these words darted with a quick, sharp pain into Beatrice Ormond's mind, rankling there long after she had quitted the speaker and sat alone in her chamber, repeating them over and over again, as if under some secret compulsion.

They could not be true, she felt sure of that: one glimpse of Kenneth's well-remembered face sufficed to banish the very supposition; and his words of passionate love, breathed so often into her ear, made it seem absurd. Yet there was one circumstance that those cruel words recalled which would not be dismissed, but remained in obstinate defiance of all her efforts.

One night, shortly after the commencement of her engagement at the Lynnburgh theatre, the actors had pointed out to her, through a rent in the curtain, the distinguished patron of the evening, at whose side she had observed a lovely, fair-haired girl, with patrician features, and a sweet expression that she had wished to borrow when she played Juliet. She recalled the face now with tenfold distinctness, though at the time her gaze had been more arrested by that other face near it, which had since become almost godlike in her eyes. Why had he never spoken to her of that night? She had never heard him even mention the name of Douglas.

In a thousand different aspects this thought presented itself, assuming greater significance the longer she weighed it. It would not be argued away; and all through the restless hours of that night it haunted her pillow. When, late next norning, she awoke from a short sleep, it started up afresh, challenging either peace or rest until it should be satisfied. Oh! if only Kenneth were come, that she might tell him all, and receive a confutation of the cowardly slander from his own lips!

Never before, in all the course of her life, had time moved with so laggard a pace as now, when she counted the weary hours that must intervene ere she saw his princely form waiting for her at the wings, and saw his smile of love, welcome to her soul as sunshine to the flowers.

CHAPTER XXII.

"THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE NEVER DID RUN SMOOTH."

Kenneth Errol had returned from his compulsory journey, and was opening the letters which lay awaiting him on his desk in the customhouse.

Over one of those he pondered with knit brows and a discomposure too obvious to escape notice, especially that of the ever-vigilant superintendent, Mr. Lesly, who knew that he would soon be unmasked, and appear in his true colours to his hitherto easy dupe. He had examined previously

this same letter, which he recognised as coming from a certain goldsmith in Lynnburgh, from whom Kenneth had made, to his knowledge, frequent and costly purchases; and it was not difficult for him to surmise its contents, or to divine the reason why they were causing him who read them such palpable annoyance.

Several times in the course of that day he observed Kenneth apply to the note as if for confirmation of his fears, and with growing dissatisfaction each time.

And no wonder; for it was an unwelcome reminder of stern realities to one who had been living in a delirious dream during the past months, and who, in the accomplishment of the object on which his heart was set, had recklessly disregarded the admonitions of prudence and rectitude, and rushed on, denying himself nothing that could in any way hasten the achievement of his purpose. And thus, infatuated by passion, he had lavished gifts on her who was its object, heedless of future liabilities, and resolutely ignoring the fact that already his expenditure had far exceeded his income, and that, if demands for payments should be now made, he was wholly inadequate to meet them.

The ostrich, however, does not escape the danger by hiding its head in the sand: nor did Kenneth Errol, who now found himself applied to for instant payment of the sum of two hundred and fifty pounds, the price of jewels purchased for the beautiful actress, who had worn them on the stage for his gratification. The demand was made on the ground of sheer necessity. The goldsmith had to meet certain unexpected liabilities, for which this money was absolutely necessary, and he wrote imploring that it should be immediately paid.

What was he to do? All his ready money was gone, and it wanted yet several months ere he should receive any more. In other circumstances he would have applied to his brother, who, although rigidly economical, was generous withal, and ever ready to respond to an appeal made by any one in distress; but ever since his attachment to Miss Ormond had become known, there had been complete estrangement between himself and all the members of his family, especially Ronald, whose pride was too deeply wounded by the prospect of such an alliance to pardon the brother who had contracted it.

But there was Mr. Lesly, who had always proved so obliging a friend: why not solicit his aid, and give him an opportunity of proving that he was a friend indeed?

No; to betray his pecuniary embarrassment to one whom he too surely divined to be his rival, was as impossible as the other alternative. Besides, of late Mr. Lesly had shown symptoms of declining regard, and appeared to entertain jealous suspicion of him, more especially since his return that morning, when he had evinced a decided coolness of manner very different from his usual effusiveness; which circumstance tended to confirm a doubt already existing in Kenneth's mind as to the genuineness of the reason he had assigned for the journey on which he had been sent.

To whom, then, could be apply? All his friends were now estranged from him, any one of whom would have esteemed it a pleasure to help him in difficulty. He stood alone, compelled to face this strait, and seeing no way of escape from it.

As he opened the strong box in which the money of which he had charge was kept, the tempter, taking occasion of his desperate plight, whispered a yet undreamt-of alternative—an easy solution of the problem. Why not appropriate some of that money lying idle there for the liquidation of his debts, until, in the course of a few months, he should be able to refund it? No one would be a loser by it, and it was perfectly easy for him to conceal the deficit.

He did not notice that the lynx eyes of Norman Lesly were eagerly watching this mute conflict with a great temptation, and had not failed to catch the expression of resolute purpose Kenneth's face betrayed as he consigned the money to its place in the box.

"I'll watch him," said Mr. Lesly to himself.

All throughout that day Kenneth had a preoccupied air, and appeared often oblivious of what was passing. And when the hour of closing came, his restlessness increased almost to feverishness, and prevented him from attending to anything for five consecutive minutes.

All the other clerks had departed; only he and Lesly remained.

"Are you ready, Errol?" asked the latter, as he shot the bolts into their sockets across the iron-plated window-shutters, and prepared to lock the door.

"No, Lesly, I must wait a little longer to-night," replied Kenneth, pretending to be absorbed in counting up a row of figures in his ledger. "I must get my arrears of work made up as soon as possible, else I'll be in a mess. You may leave the key with me; I intend to be here early to-morrow."

"Very well," returned Lesly, laying the key on Kenneth's desk. "If I should be here before you, I'll send for it. Good-night."

And with these words he went out and closed the door.

Kenneth sprang upon the window-ledge, and peered through a crevice in the shutter, until he saw him disappear round a curve of the road. Then, with trembling fingers, he unlocked the ponderous box, and counted the whole sum it contained carefully several times. Satisfied of its amount, he next took from it, with unsteady fingers, bank notes and gold to the amount of £250.

He knew that a coach would pass for Lynnburgh within half-an-hour, but he could not endure the delay, so walked away as fast as possible, intending to take it when it came up.

On arriving at his destination he went immediately to the jeweller's shop, where he discharged his debts, and received genuine thanks for his promptitude in doing so—thanks which made him blush, but not with pleasure.

Thence with eager haste he went to the theatre, on whose walls large bills were posted up, announcing in high-flown language the early close of Miss Beatrice Ormond's engagement at the Lynnburgh theatre, and inviting the public to take full advantage of the few remaining opportunities they would have of witnessing her marvellous impersonations.

Here was another reminder of those inevitable realities to which he had been hitherto so insensible. Beatrice going away so soon; and it had been his settled purpose to accompany her. How was it to be done? What of his other debts? What of his arrangements for the future? What of the inmates of Cliff Cottage? Disagreeable reflections, certainly; yet they vanished at the thought of Beatrice herself, whose beauty could charm them all away, as darkness disappears before the dawn.

He heard the people shouting in the theatre as he entered; and thinking he should like to see her once more acting on the stage ere she finally quitted it, as he fully expected her to do shortly, he stole quietly into his private box, and watched her unseen.

The play was "Romeo and Juliet"; and never had she looked more lovely, he thought. How exquisite the poetry sounded spoken by her lips! What a voice of music it was, acting on the chords of the heart, as the touch of a skilful musician on the harp's responsive strings! As he listened to it, and saw how it affected the vast multitude assembled there, he felt a triumphant joy to think that sweeter accents than they had ever heard were reserved for his ears alone, that on him was lavished a smile brighter, more radiant far than any they ever beheld on her face. What sacrifice was too great to make for so rare a prize? In the contemplation of her loveliness, so powerfully enhanced by the attractions of the stage, the disquietude of his own heart was forgotten. She was his own: proud, peerless queen as she was, she owned him as her rightful lord; and what were difficulties, obstacles, or hardships to one who had so rare a treasure in view?

Despite her oft-repeated injunction, he went down to the stage at the close of the third act, when, in response to deafening shouts, she was being led before the footlights by her handsome Romeo, who appeared to have relished his part amazingly, and regarded his fair Juliet with very genuine admiration, as she curtised once more to the audience and swept past him, behind the curtain.

The sudden transition from the glare in front of it to the gloom on the other side, prevented her from observing someone standing near, until her hands were seized in a warm, loving clasp, and Kenneth's voice said:

"What have you been doing, or saying, or looking, my charmer, to make them shout in this fashion? What is my poor admiration worth in comparison with ovations like this? Tell me, Beatrice, are you glad to see me, even though I am not Romeo, who is scowling at me as if I were Paris?"

She was trembling violently, but whether with the excitement of acting, or with the sudden surprise of his presence, he could not tell. Her voice, when at length she spoke, had a tremor in it, and her manner was troubled, more than it need have been, he thought. It seemed to him, too, that she made a less fervent response to his greeting than he had anticipated.

"Oh, yes," she said, in answer to his loving inquiry; "but don't speak to me just now; I must be ready when the curtain rises. And don't stay in the theatre to-night: it will spoil my acting if you do. Promise me you will not."

"You are surely hard to deny me a privilege any prentice lad may enjoy," he said. "Yet I can refuse you nothing, my queen. I must obey you. But tell me, Beatrice, are you quite well? You are trembling very much. Did I startle you?"

"I am quite well. I did not expect you so soon. But I must leave you or I shall be late," she replied, and hastened away to get ready for the next scene, leaving him with an unpleasant conviction that something had occurred to vex or annoy her.

What could it be? Had he displeased her in any way? No; her manner showed a peculiar tenderness quite incompatible with such a supposition. Perhaps it was some difficulty in connection with her profession. Whatever it was, he would know definitely in a short time, and meanwhile, in compliance with the promise she had exacted from him, he left the theatre, and strolled about the town as the best method of whiling away the time.

Having no particular destination, he wheeled about when nearly at the end of the street leading from the theatre to the market place, and began retracing his steps in the direction of the inn. At the same moment, a figure darted round the angle of an adjacent building, and had quite vanished ere he reached the spot. Something familiar about it arrested his attention, making him anxious to discover and identify its possessor; but his efforts to do so proved futile, as no further trace of it could be seen. The impression, however, that it belonged to Norman Lesly would not be shaken off; and during the rest of his perambulations he had an uneasy feeling that it was still haunting him, even when he re-entered the door of the theatre.

The curtain was descending on the last scene in the history of those "star-crossed lovers," whose untimely fate has drawn tears from so many eyes. None fell from his, however; on the contrary, they surveyed the mimic tomb and its two occupants with a positive fierceness, which only terminated with the termination of the play.

To his impatience it seemed a long, long time before he heard the rustle of her robes and saw her gliding toward him amid a heterogeneous mass of scenery and stage furniture, which evidently prevented her from lifting her eyes until within a few feet of him. But that momentary glance was sufficient to confirm him in his fear that something had transpired during his absence to trouble her.

"Beatrice, what is wrong?" he inquired, bending down to gaze into her face. "Tell me, and I will help you if it be in my power."

"Not here, not here," she answered, hurriedly, withdrawing her hand as she proceeded to the stage-door.

In anxious silence Kenneth followed until, on reaching a side street a few yards from the theatre, Beatrice, instead of going on to the inn, passed down this street, saying, in answer to his unspoken inquiry, "I cannot go home: we might be overheard."

"Beatrice, this suspense is intolerable," said Kenneth; "will you not tell me at once what this strange alteration in your manner means?"

"Wait a few minutes," she replied, excitedly, "till we get out of hearing. I will tell you all then."

He drew her arm affectionately within his own as he accompanied her to the outskirts of the town, where the sound of the sea made itself heard.

There he paused, and, taking her face between his hands, said, as he lovingly scrutinised it:

"Not another moment shall I wait: now you must tell me what this mysterious trouble is. Speak, Beatrice, for I am burning to know."

To his surprise she burst into tears, crying in accents more thrilling a thousand times than any the stage had ever heard:

"Oh, Kenneth! take this poisoned doubt from my mind!—this fearful thought that has made a very hell within me since the moment it first was planted."

"What can you mean, Beatrice?" exclaimed Kenneth, almost as agitated as she. "I am utterly unable to comprehend you. What doubt is it you speak of? Not of me, surely?"

"Would that I could answer no!" she said, meeting his sorrowful look of perplexity with one unutterably touching; "but I cannot: it clings to me, sleeping or waking, and has robbed me of my peace of mind. Only you can remove it; and I have been counting the hours till I should see you and hear you say it is not true."

"Then let me hear it at once, Beatrice," urged

her lover, growing more alarmed than ever, as he perceived how deeply she was affected. "But first tell me who has been whispering doubts of me to you?"

"It was Mr. Lesly, your friend."

"Ah! I thought so. When was he with you?"

"Only the night before last. I always suspected that he was not sincere, but had I known what I now know of him, nothing could have induced me to hold any intercourse whatever with him."

"Your words are quite enigmatical to me, dearest Beatrice; please begin at the beginning, and tell me the whole story."

Thereupon Miss Ormond related her strange interview with Meg Hardy, and her subsequent interview with Norman Lesly. But when she came to the most vital point of all, she hesitated, unable even to ask the question on the answer to which her life's happiness depended.

Kenneth had been too much amazed at this revelation of his former friend's baseness and duplicity to utter a word while she was speaking; but, observing her extreme agitation at the very point in which the interest of her narrative culminated, he urgently besought her to proceed, saying:

"Don't be afraid to tell me all, Beatrice. If he insulted you further, he will answer for it to me. Go on."

Still she paused, unable to control herself sufficiently to tell him of those venomous words which were rankling yet in her mind.

He saw her features working painfully, and inferred that she had not yet told him the worst.

They were walking slowly over a common that fringed the shore, and he had thrown his arm round her in his impassioned earnestness, while he besought her not to withhold the sequel of this treachery on Lesly's part.

Suddenly she turned to him, and, holding his face so that she could look straight into his eyes, said, with a fervour inexpressibly touching:

"Kenneth Errol, I have loved you as I thought women only loved in poetry. You are to me the embodiment of all my dreams. My very life seems linked inseparably with yours. I have no interests, hopes, or happiness apart from you. You are my all in all. Tell me, knowing this, could you deceive me?"

"Deceive you, Beatrice? Have my actions so

belied me, that you can suppose such a thing possible?" was his indignant rejoinder, and she saw his eyes darken with the sorrow he felt.

"Oh, I must believe you," she cried; "to doubt you is death. And I know it was false what he said about——"

"About what?" asked he, a sudden terror seizing him at that moment, as he recalled Lesly's altered behaviour toward him that day, and that momentary glimpse he had caught of him in the street a little while ago.

She saw the instantaneous pallor that crept over his cheek, and the dusky shadow that fell like an invisible curtain over his grey eye; and her own face expressed such painful eagerness, that he quailed beneath her scrutiny, and almost recoiled from her.

She saw this too, and the dread which had seemed on the point of being quelled for ever, rose up in redoubled strength, as she gasped out:

"Why do you look so? Oh, Kenneth, my beloved! speak and tell me it was false! Tell me you never loved her—that baronet's daughter he mentioned to me. Say it is not true!"

He tried to utter a denial; but his lips refused to do his bidding. Fear had paralysed every faculty, now that he knew his secret had been betrayed; and under the searching light of those dark eyes, dilating every instant with increasing terror, falsehood would have withered almost ere it had its birth. He stood before her dumb, convicted of the charge she had implored him to confute.

A sharp cry of pain escaped her lips in that dread moment that saw the confirmation of her fear—the fear against which she had struggled so resolutely till then, and which only his tacit admission could have confirmed. Never again would she experience a pang such as darted to her heart's core now when she saw her idol shattered at her feet.

"Then it is all true?" she asked, in tones that were the death-knell of hope; then added, "And I believed you!"

The unutterable sadness that rang through these last words seemed to break the spell of silence under which the conscience-stricken lover was bound, and he burst forth into passionate pleading, every word of which shook the woman's soul to its very centre.

"Hear me, Beatrice!" he cried. "You would not condemn me, surely, at the instance of one whom you know to be my enemy. It is true-I will not attempt to deny it-that I once thought I loved her: and believed myself that I did, until I met you; and then I discovered it was mere fancy. In comparison with you, she was but a shadow. I could not help it, Beatrice: when I saw you, and only then, did I learn what love is, and found that I had deceived myself in supposing I loved her. I struggled against my passion, and strove to be the same as before to her: but she had noticed I was changed, and soon ascertained the reason. Then she released me from my engagement. I wrote, professing my sorrow for what had happened, and offering to make all amends within my power: but she spurned my offer, and refused either to see or hear from me again. Can you blame me, then, if I concealed this from you for a time? For indeed I meant to tell you of it some day. But how could I risk losing you by a rash revelation of what could only cause you pain? Oh! don't judge me harshly, Beatrice! Well you know how dearly I love you. What sacrifice would I not make for you? And if I wronged you in keeping this a secret, think how great my temptation was, and pity me. Oh, my darling! ask of me any penance, and I will gladly pay it; but say you forgive me now, for I have told you all the truth, as I shall answer to God."

He had seized both her hands, and held them pinioned close to his breast, as he uttered these words, gazing into her face the while with looks that caused every nerve to quiver.

Terrible was the strife raging in the woman's heart between her own idolatrous love for this man and the dictates of a voice within which told her she had no right to his affection, that she was standing between him and the one to whom that affection was due. For she knew, both from the intuitions of her own heart, and the account Lesly had given, that, although pride had induced the forsaken girl to reject the offer of reconciliation from one whose affection was evidently estranged, she was still mourning over her loss, and might forfeit life itself in her hopeless sorrow. should this really happen, how could she ever cease to regard herself as having hastened that bitter end? Could she consent to accept the love of a man who had renounced his allegiance to the woman whom he had sworn to make his wife? No: he was not free to seek her love, although he had released himself from his former contract; and never would she stoop to accept what in truth and justice belonged to another. Better that her heart should break than derive its happiness from another's ruin.

Yet oh! his eyes were upon her—those wondrous eyes that seemed possessed of some mesmeric spell, whose influence had proved only too potent from the first; and, as she looked at that beseeching face whose beauty had made the sunshine of her life, and listened to that imploring voice, whose tones caused every chord of her heart to quiver, the resolution to which her high sense of honour had brought her, almost gave way. Easier had it been then to die than to steel her heart against that sweet influence, never so sweet as now.

"It was never hard for me to forgive," she said, in a voice which, despite her efforts, trembled: "nor is it now, even though the friend I loved and trusted most has proved the destroyer of my life's happiness."

"No, no, Beatrice! you wrong me," cried Kenneth, entreatingly. "I will atone for my offence by a life's devotion."

"Yes, Kenneth Errol," she proceeded, with more firmness, "you have made me curse the day I ever saw you. The love you offered me was stolen from her to whom you gave it first—a love I would have spurned like any other stolen gift, had you not wilfully deceived me. But I never knew it, never knew that a barrier was between us which only dishonour could remove. In the sight of Heaven you were as much that woman's husband as if you had been joined by marriage rites; and only by breaking her heart could you break the tie that bound you. Had you no pity for her? no respect for me? Did you think I would accept a love that belonged to another? Why did you thus deceive me?"

"Beatrice, I never meant to deceive you," he pleaded. "When she herself cancelled the engagement, surely I was not to blame for seeking to win your love; and I did mean to tell you the whole truth. Remember, my troth was plighted to her in a moment of thoughtless passion: I did not know what love is. This is the matured love of manhood. Can you doubt it, Beatrice?"

"Speak no more of love to me," she cried, waving him off with the queenly gesture which strong feeling made resistless. "Many a time you have spoken such words to the woman you have now forsaken; and, were you to meet another whose face charmed your fancy, I would be cast off as she has been. No, I will not listen to any protestations. The love that can be won in an hour from its former object to another is not the love that will satisfy me. Go back to that poor, injured girl, and make what atonement you may for your perfidy: to me you can make none. May God forgive you. Fare you well."

"Beatrice, you cannot mean it!" implored Kenneth in his agony, casting himself at her feet, as she proceeded to leave him. "You could not break this heart that would shed its last drop for you?"

She dared not look at him; his very voice was maddening. With one inarticulate cry, fraught with a bitterness worse than that of death, she sprang from him, darting onwards as if goaded by frenzy. Into the shades of night she passed, and not nntil she had vanished amid their gloom did Kenneth Errol recover from the numb stupor that had overpowered him, and gradually realise the full import of what had transpired.

His first wild impulse was to follow her, and fall at her feet once more; but the remembrance

of that fixed, awful look which had accompanied her last words checked the vain thought, and with a smothered groan he threw himself down on the grass, crushed beneath the weight of this allunlooked-for disappointment.

And she—whose own hand had dashed from her lips the cup of happiness just when it mantled to the brim—how fared she in that hour?

Ah, who shall fathom grief like hers, as through that fearful night she wrestled with its mortal pangs? Who shall estimate at what cost; the temptation to recall him she had loved so well was resisted? or gauge the depths of that despair which settled down on the brave soul to which honour was dearer than joy, as it turned for ever from its cherished hopes to face the dread reality of a blighted existence?

In after years Fame held its glittering goblet to her lips, and she drained its envied draught to the dregs; but the thirst burning within her breast was one Fame had no power to quench. Amid her proudest triumphs its craving made itself felt, turning them all to mockery; 'and through the eventful epochs of a brilliant career she carried ever with her a heart that looked yearningly back to a dream of love, from which the rude voice of sorrow had awakened her, to weep henceforth to the close of a desolate life.



ATALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

Subject for April—"Will the extension of the Franchise to women improve their social position?" Papers not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before April 25th. The best paper on either side will be published in the magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Describe an imaginary episode of the French Revolution. Give an estimate of the character ol Thackeray's Ethel Newcombe. Write a sonnet on Resignation. (Members can only enter for one of these subjects. Papers not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before April 25th.)

ANSWERS TO SEARCH OUESTIONS (MARCH).

1. Mrs. Browning. 2. George Macdonald. 3. Alfred Austin, 4. Robert Browning, 5. A. Proctor,

1. William Wordsworth, 2. Hartley Coleridge.

1. From the poem Lovesight. 2. By Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

1. A learned professor, a native of Sessa, whom Leo X. engaged to deliver instructions in the Roman Academy. He was treated with particular favour, and honoured with the title of Count Palatine, also being allowed to use the name and Arms of the Medici.

2. Francesco Stabili, usually called Ceeco d'Ascoli, from the place of his birth, devoted his time to the study of the "System of the Universe," He was one of the first Italian scholars who undertook the study of natural philosophy, in his poem entitled L'Acerba.

- " Something is not there which was. Winter's wondrous frost and snow, Summer's clouds, where are they now?
 - " They are soft, but chill and dead; And thy tears upon my head Burn like points of frozen lead."-Shelley.

1. From the Boy and the Angel. Robert Browning.
2. From Rudel to the lady of Tripoli. Browning.

SEARCH QUESTIONS (APRIL).

1. Give authors of the following quotations:-

"What is fanatic frenzy, scorn'd so much And dreaded more than a contagious touch?"

"Man in Society is like a flower Blown in its native bed.'

2. From what poems are they taken?

1. What is the origin of these lines, and to what do they refer? Also give author and work.

> "To mutter o'er some text of God Engraven on his reeking sword."

2. What is meant by-

"The floweret of a hundred leaves?"

III.

I. Who wrote these lines, and to whom do they allude?

" I am a senseless thing-with a hev!

Men call me a king—with a ho!

For my luxury and ease, they brought me o'er the seas!
With a hey ho! Nonnie, nonnie no!"

2. What was the origin of these lines?

" And shall Trelawney die? And must Trelawney die? Then thrice ten thousand Cornish men Will know the reason why,"

Give the authors of the following quotations:-

"Be hushed, be hushed, ye bitter winds! Ye pelting rains, a little rest; Lie still, lie still, ye busy thoughts That wring with grief my aching breast."

"I locked up all my treasure, I journey'd many a mile, 2.

And by my grief did measure The passing time awhile."

" What poor astronomers are they Take women's eyes for stars, And set their thoughts in battle array, To fight such idle wars;

When, in the end, they shall approve 'Tis but a jest drawn out of love!"

1. Who was John Dowland, and what made him famous?

2. Who was the real author of the sonnet beginning -"Dowland to thee is dear, -

though it is often attributed to Shakespeare.

I. What poem are these lines from? "Or through the mystic ringlets of the vale We flash our fairy feet in gamesome prank."

2. What personage is here described?

"— tripping down the steps from one garden terrace to another, hat in hand, his fair hair blowing from his flushed cheeks, his slim figure clad in mourning."





[P. SALLINI, pinx!.

THE CARICATURE.

Engraved by Andre and Sleigh.

(By termission of the Berlin Photographic Co.)



By MRS. HUNGERFORD,

Author of "Molly Bawn," "Phyllis," "The Hoyden," &c.

CHAPTER XXX.

"This bitter love is sorrow in all lands,
Draining of eyelids, wringing of drenched hands,
Sighing of hearts."

THE fortnight suggested at first by the doctors as a probable date for the removal of Vincent's bandages, has grown into three weeks.

Little glimpses of light had been allowed her, anxious experiments that had left both the doctors only the more certain that the operation had been successful even up to their most sanguine expectations.

"Good heavens!" the Squire mouned even in the midst of his exultations, "to think that she might have seen me all these years, and didn't."

It was of himself *first* he thought, of course. Perhaps it was not so much selfishness as want of imagination that made him forget all the other things she might have seen as well—the trees, the flowers, the ever-changing sea, and the eternally beautiful sky above her.

These primary liftings of the softbandages across her eyes had let her look, for the briefest interval of course, on her father—then her sisters, and then Mrs. Egerton.

Cedric she had not seen, nor had he asked to see her. From the first he had been averse to having her eyes touched, not that he openly expressed this aversion, but there was a silence about him, a tacit dislike to the whole affair, not to be misunderstood. There was a good deal of the fanatic in his nature, and to tamper thus with God's decrees struck him as being little less than sinful. And there was another thought, too. If the operation should prove successful—somehow he always felt sure it would —she would no longer be dependent on him; she would be no longer his.

And now the day has come when the bandages are to be removed for fully ten minutes, during which time Vincent is to see all whom she desires to see, within her own family. The Squire, thinking to please her, had stipulated for Cedric's presence, he being her fiancé (Cedric, who shrank from the ordeal, but could not say so), and for Tom's too, he being Cedric's brother.

Mrs. Egerton had made strenuous efforts to prevent Tom's being on the scene at this final unveiling of Vincent's eyes, but, to her wrath and astonishment, he had refused to be set aside; and the Squire could see nothing in her nervous hints—and the girls were positively stupid.

It is a brilliant afternoon, although the morning had been sadly wet and depressing, with dull winds and rain blowing against the window-panes, and all the park and uplands looking crushed and spiritless. Those melancholy flowers of autumn, that to the end make stand against the coming of the angry winter, are still holding up their mournful heads; but the others all have given way, the hollyhocks are rent and torn, and the—

"Asters of palest, delicatest blue, Slender and fragile,"

are lying prone upon their beds, sodden through and through by the rain. They had been accustomed, poor silly things, to think of the warm days only; to—

"Lift their golden eyes

Adoring to the sun, whose warm kiss dries

Their tears of dew."

Now too forlorn, too altogether spent they lie, to feel the late splendour of their capricious suitor, as he shines upon them once again.

Sir Ebenezer has come down from town, for the last time to-day, to see to the removal of the bandages once more, and then to bid his charming patient—he has almost fallen in love with Vincent—a final farewell. Anything that has to be done after this can be carried out by the local doctor, under his directions.

Yes—it is a farewell visit, he tells Vincent, with a desire to instil hope and courage into her, as she stands pale and very still at the end of the library, waiting for him to remove the delicate soft cloths that lie across her eyes and forehead. She knows; it had been thought better to tell her that Cedric Brande would be present when the bandages were being removed, and this final trial of her sight took place. Unfortunately, however, it has occurred to no one, not even to Mrs. Egerton (who, no doubt, lost sight of it in her agitation) to tell her that Tom Brande also would be on the scene.

Vincent at first had begged that Cedric might not be present—a nervous trembling possessed her as she made the request—but the Squire had overruled her wish; and, indeed, after a little while, being always most tenderly amenable to the call of any duty that lay before her, she had seen that possibly she had no right to refuse to let the man she had promised to marry be present on this occasion. Perhaps had she known of Cedric's secret shrinking from being present, she might have felt her sense of duty less oppressive.

"You really wish to see him, darling?" Mrs.

Egerton had asked when the Squire was gone, holding the girl's hands anxiously, fondly between her own. "It is an ordeal, I know. But if you are fond of him—if you even honestly like him—I agree with your father, and I think you ought to let him be present. Because then—you would want to see him——"

She waited, but the girl said nothing, only bent forward, covering her eyes with her hands.

"What is it, darling?"

"Nothing," in a low voice. "Only I—sometimes I'm afraid!"

"Oh! it is so natural!" said Mrs. Egerton, with eager sympathy. "But if you love him, Vincent—and it is not only the face," with curious premonition, "one loves. But if you have a doubt even now," very earnestly this, "I can still quite easily arrange for you that he shall not be present."

But Vincent had said "No! She would have him there. Yes, he might come, and it was nothing; nothing really—only nervousness, perhaps, and——"

She stopped there, and somehow Mrs. Egerton could not help thinking that the answer was a little vague—a little unsatisfactory. But she did not dare to question further. An uneasy vision of *Tom* Brande kept her silent; yet—so strange is the human heart, that when, at last, the *vital* moment came, she forgot Tom Brande altogether, and so hurried the catastrophe.

And now the doctors are bending over Vincent, who is sitting in a chair quite at the end of the oval room, her father standing on her right, Mrs. Egerton with Madge and Janet on the left. Batty, who, like the poor and proverbial bad halfpenny, is always with us, is leaning against the bookcase, whilst the two Brandes are stationed at the end of the room, almost opposite Vincent as she now is sitting.

Slowly, gently the doctors remove the bandages, and slowly, nervously she looks up. To her right first, where she knows her father is standing.

"You, papa!" says she softly. "I begin," with a little ecstatic laugh that is half a sob, "to know you now" (this is the third time she has seen him). "And you, auntie," to Mrs. Egerton, "and Janet—and Madge——Sir Ebenezer," turning to him eagerly, "I can see really to-day!—and——"

Suddenly her eyes, travelling as yet anxiously, nervously, reach the end of the room, and there she sees two figures; she raises herself slowly to her feet, her face whitens.

"And there——" stammers she, "there!" pointing, "who is that—there?"

"Cedric!" cries Madge, eagerly; "Cedric is there!"

A little nervous, happy laugh breaks from Vincent.

"Cedric!" cries she. "Ah! I knew how he would look!"

She makes a quick rush forward; but alas! it is not towards Cedric she runs: with her lips parted and her beautiful, half-awakened eyes alight with love, she holds out her hands to—

Tom!

Shocked, miserable, horrified, yet half mad with a strange, wild joy, he meets her, his face drawn and white as death. Catching those tender outstretched hands, he crushes them between his own. Yet his self-possession never forsakes him. He has her to consider.

"Tom Brande," says he to her in a low tone, "not Cedric! The merest mistake, Vincent; my dear, dear little sister, a very merest mistake!"

For a second the eyes, now wide and terrified, look into his; for a second her lips part as if to speak. Then, once again, the light dies out of the eyes that as yet scarce know it, and even before Mrs. Egerton (who has had her fears all along) can reach her, she has fallen in a dead faint into Tom Brande's arms.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"But when I saw her start And turn aside——"

This sudden insensibility of Vincent's had naturally caused great consternation. Sir Ebenezer, however, in his very grandest manner, had essayed to calm their fears.

She was quite worn out by the excitement; such occurrences were by no means rare. He was of opinion that it would do her no harm. But Sir Ebenezer, in spite of his world-wide reputation for cleverness, had not understood *this* situation; indeed, to his dying day, he believed Tom Brande to be the accepted lover.

Vincent had been carried to her room, and it

was only when she had come to herself again, and anxiety about her was at an end, that the others began to think of Cedric—and with undisguised dismay. Both Mrs. Egerton and Madge—indeed all of them—had heard that unfortunate cry of "Cedric," and had seen the lovelight in the poor eyes that so long had lain in darkness, and the fatal mistake that Vincent had made had almost paralysed them. And now who is to go down and have the interview that they all feel is impending —with Cedric!

The question goes round. Who? To a man they all refuse. Good gracious! what is one to say? Of course, it was a mistake—but—Cedric's face had been a picture as she lay in Tom's arms in that dead faint! And Tom's face—that had been a picture too! Janet said he looked as if he was going to faint too, and a nice business that would have been. Who could have helped up the two of them? Batty said this was a conundrum, and that she had better ask him another, but any little attempt at lightness of heart that they tried to put on rang very false, and moment by moment their embarrassment seemed to grow greater.

Finally, as might have been foreseen, Mrs. Egerton, dear, good-hearted woman, is made the scapegoat, and, in fear and trembling, at last consents to go downstairs (one step at a time), and interview the stricken young man, who is popularly supposed to be still waiting for news of Vincent in the library.

"But when she gets there, The lib'ry is bare,"

to misquote an older and better story, and no young man, good or bad, is to be seen.

Mrs. Egerton, who has still many youthful moments, picks up her skirts, and rushes upstairs again.

"But wasn't even *Tom* there?" asked the anxious people above, who are, perhaps, the least little bit in the world disappointed at this unexpected *dénouement*. They had been looking forward to very different and far more exciting news.

"No, not even Tom," said Mrs. Egerton, thankfully; she felt at this momentous hour that it would have been even a more awful task to face Tom than his distinctly ill-used brother.

Cedric, when he heard that first glad mention of

his name (the gladness of which had nothing to do with him), had looked quickly, first at Vincent, and then at his brother. Both faces had been a revelation to him! And when, a second later, the girl he had for so many weeks regarded as his future wife, lay fainting in his brother's arms, the whole truth lay bare to him.

Without another glance at either of them, and under cover of the confusion that ensued, he slipped out of the room, and out of the house, and, with a haste of which he himself was unaware, back to his own place; where he now (it is an hour later) shuts himself up in his own room, turning the key in the door with a feverish energy.

A sense of loneliness overpowers him, as he sinks into a chair. A sense of want. He knows now, as well as if all the world cried it aloud to him, that Vincent no longer loves him! that she had never loved him! That through the extraordinary instinct of the blind, she had felt a difference between his brother's voice and his, though hardly any human thing, with sight, could distinguish one intonation from the other.

He tries to reason it away. To tell himself that when she sees him again, when all is explained, things will be as they were yesterday—(how long ago yesterday seems!) but some inward force compels him to give up this thought. No. It is Tom she loves! And Tom! Once again his brother's face rises before him, as it was when Vincent had fallen fainting into his arms, and he knows that Tom loves her!

Up and down, up and down the room he goes, his heart in a turmoil; anger, disappointment, he feels; but, surely, there ought to be something more.

What is his strongest feeling? He has lost her. Yes, that is beyond all doubt. He does not, for a moment, blind himself to that. But with that knowledge, should there not be some other, deeper, emotion than anger? And if—if—he had really loved her, would he have been so clear-eyed all at once?

This comes to him like a shock. What had his love meant—protection, pity? Pity truly is akin to love, but is it love? Does much of this lone-liness, from which he is now suffering, spring from the knowledge that he—no longer loves her?

Oh no! impossible. Getting up, he paces the

room again, fighting with himself as he goes. He tears his heart to pieces, as he walks rapidly to and fro, but the fact, the cold, wretched fact, remains He no longer loves her!

It is terrible! His poor, pretty girl! That is how he calls her to himself now in his abasement. It is, perhaps, a pity that he had not called her so to her during all these past weeks. His knowledge that his love has been so poor a thing, that it has lived so short a life, humiliates him. It had been built solely, as it seems now, on his longing to protect her—to shelter her against the blasts of adversity. Now that she no longer requires that protection, he no longer requires her! Some charm that she had for him has snapped in two; some virtue has gone out of her. In her weakness lay her strength, so far as he was concerned; but with that weakness gone, his chivalrous thoughts towards her must go too.

His past, so far as she is concerned, lies dead. She is gone from him for ever. He knows now the real meaning of the repugnance he had felt when they told him that her eyes *might* be restored to her.

In the meantime, Tom had gone home half mad. He had not seen Cedric's abrupt departure, and when he found Vincent was not dead—as he half feared for the moment—but only unconscious, had looked round for his brother—to find him gone! This struck a sinister note in his thoughts, and, indeed, brought him to a full knowledge of how things were likely to stand in the future between him and Cedric. He waited a little while to hear how Vincent was getting on, and, being satisfied as to her state, had run all the way homewards, with a heart on fire.

To explain matters to Cedric was his one thought; but how? What was there to explain? What words were there that could possibly tone down the truth?

Could he tell Cedric that he honestly believed it was all a "mere mistake"? He had called it so to Vincent, and though, undoubtedly, a mistake had been made, there was still something beneath it—that was no mistake, but most fatally real. Was it possible for him, then, to tell Cedric that, after all, it might be that Vincent loved him, and him only? Tom knew that he could not tell him that; but he could, at all events, compel Cedric to

He knew, though he refused to let himself dwell upon it, that Vincent had made her choice, not now, but long ago; and that it was he whom she had always loved, in some strange, unacknowledged

way, not Cedric.

Reaching home, he went straight to Cedric's private den, only to find the door locked, and to be told by a servant that he would see no one—

"He gave orders, sir, that even you were to be denied."

Tom turned away. The servant's kindly meant emphasis on the "you" sounding satirically in his ears. Was it not to bar him out that those doors were locked?

CHAPTER XXXII.

"But now my grief,
Like festering wounds grown cold, begins to smart.
The raging gnaws, and tears my heart."

"YES, she will see you," says Mrs. Egerton, gently. "But you must remember all she has gone through. Even now, although it is a week since—since—" Mrs. Egerton hesitates and colours, and Tom Brande says:

"Yes, I know," gloomily.

"Even now she is very nervous—very unstrung. I think it was a pity she refused to see your brother. But, as you know, she was most obstinate about it, and went into quite a passion of tears when we urged her. The Squire himself would not hear of her being further persuaded. Still, for all that, she insists on considering herself engaged to your brother. He has gone away?"

"Yes," says Tom, who, in spite of himself, is looking very like a culprit.

"You don't know when he will be back?"

"I don't even know where he is," with increasing gloom.

"Tom," says Mrs. Egerton suddenly, after a rather painful silence, "there is no use in disguising the fact. It is *you* she loves."

"Why should she love either of us?"

Mrs. Egerton looks at him. "I don't call that," says she, "a very ingenuous answer."

"You are right," says Tom, suddenly—vehemently. "I know—I feel that she loves me; but, believe this, Mrs. Egerton," with a touch of anxious passion, "she does not—she could not—love me one half as much as I love her!"

There is a little silence.

"It is very unfortunate," says Mrs. Egerton presently, with a sigh; "if, when she first looked at you both, she had preferred Cedric's face to yours, how much better it would have been."

"Better!" Tom's tone almost makes her jump. He flings out his arms with an angry gesture of dissent, then, recollecting himself, colours hotly. "For Cedric, not for me," says he, in a low tone.

"I was about to say for all of us," said Mrs. Egerton. "I cannot help thinking that we—her own people—are entirely to blame. We should have described Cedric to her, and you too. It would have been a guide."

"No doubt. But to what end?" says Tom. "Cedric would never have made her happy."

"And you?" questions Mrs. Egerton, with a faint smile.

"There is small use in talking of that now," says Tom, very sadly. "A sense of honour, you say, holds her bound to my brother, and for that I honour her. But," he gets up, and goes to the window, "if things had been different. If I might have spoken and she might have heard, I think, loving her as I do with all my heart, I could have made her happy." He turns abruptly, "Of course, if Cedric—but I cannot understand him."

"No, no. None of us can, and we must not think about that"—seeing the change on his face, she adds hastily, and with her usual innate sweetness: "just yet. But a word, dear Tom. There is another thing I must mention before you meet her. The poor child is covered with shame at having shown so publicly such an open preference for yeu, who had shown none for her! Yes, yes, I know your secret. I guessed it long ago; and, indeed, I have whispered a word or two to her to comfort her. But, you see, nobody else knows it, and she is miserable about it. What a strange thing

it all is, Tom! If she had had her sight, it would have been you she would have chosen before all the world, I am sure of that; and when her sight does come to her, her instincts drew her to you. It was a terrible ordeal for the poor child, and she has suffered greatly since."

"You say," says Tom, in a low tone, "that you have told her that I love her—have loved her

all along?"

"Yes; I thought it better to do so. But," slowly, "it will make no difference to——"

"I know that! My brother stands between us. Even if she should *ever* learn to really care for me. That first glance she gave me meant nothing—she thought I was Cedric."

Mrs. Egerton hesitates. She knows perfectly that Vincent, for good and all, in that one first glance had given her heart to Tom for ever; but is it wise to say so? She grows diplomatic, and conceals the want of an answer in a heavy sigh.

"She certainly thought I was Cedric."

"Yes, yes, of course," hastily, and then even with greater haste:

"It is only to-day she has consented to see you."

"Let me see her, then," exclaims he, rising eagerly.

"You must remember," says Mrs. Egerton, anxiously and meaningly, "that if your brother were at home, she would probably by now have consented to see him too."

"Do you think I want to be warned?" says he.

"She is in the old schoolroom," Mrs. Egerton had again found herself without an answer. "You will be quiet? You will not distress her? I warn you I shall come for you in fifteen minutes, and besides——" But Tom is gone.

* * *

Pale and dejected, with still some slight bandages across her eyes, he finds her. In this room—this old schoolroom—this old friend—dear to the hearts of the girls—she had taken refuge, and the blinds being drawn, and the curtains, it lies in semi-darkness. As yet no strong glow must be allowed her.

Rising nervously, she stands still, clutching the arm of her chair.

"I have come, Vincent," says the young man, in the saddest voice in the world, "You will not

welcome me—but I felt," with a touch of passion that goes to her troubled heart, and reassures it, "that I must see you."

She is trembling excessively now, and taking her hand, he presses her back into the chair from which she has just risen.

"It was terrible!" says she, in a whisper fraught with poignant memory.

"It was truth," returns he, quickly. "From the first moment I saw you, I loved you—perhaps you knew that—and when your eyes were opened, it drew you to me. But you must not dwell on that; your coming to me then, doesn't mean that you ever gave—even one thought to me! Why then should you fret over this thing, and call it terrible?"

There is a little silence. Almost unconsciously the girl is aware of a sense of relief. It is true then what auntie had said, that he loves her—loves her only. It lifts the cloud of shame that has clung round her for so many days; indeed, ever since she awaked from that long faint, to remember how she had run, unasked, to him, with literally open arms. Such innocent, such tender arms!

"Ah! let me look at you," says she, suddenly. She pulls off the bandages (somewhat to his horror and fear, but also to his delight, for now he can again see her lovely face) and regards him with eager, nervous eyes. "Yes, it is you!" says she, naively. Her face is full of grief.

There is a pause, and then:

"Too late you know me," says he, bitterly. "But I will not have you dwell upon that first real meeting between us, with pain of any sort. I love you, Vincent. I have loved you always——" a sob in his throat stays him.

He is standing by the mantel-piece, and now he turns aside, and lays his head upon his arm. Presently he feels a light touch—the softest—the dearest—on his hair.

"Why didn't you say it before?" asks she.

Simply, and very sweetly, yet with unspeakable tenderness, she asks her pathetic question. Not for a moment does she doubt what he has said—that from the first moment of their meeting he had loved her—there was with her only an intolerable regret that he had remained silent so long.

"How could I know," says he, "that you would ever think of me?" there is such humility in his tone as goes to her heart. "And afterwards when Cedric——how could I dare to hope you might prefer me to him? He is a saint; the most perfect man I ever met in my life. Who was I that I should put myself in comparison with him?"

"I don't know," says she, sadly. "But you—were you—and that was all."

All indeed.

Suddenly he falls upon his knees before her. He has for the moment forgotten his brother—everything. "Vincent, how is it to be now?" demands he, with all the imperial sweetness of a lover's tone.

"Oh! you know. You know," says she. Her slender fingers push him from her—she rises to her feet, and her voice—is it her voice?—it is changed, certainly, so grief-laden, yet so strong, that he scarcely recognises it. "I am bound to your brother—I have given him my promise. Do you think I could forget how good he was to me, a poor blind girl, whom others——?"

"Don't talk like that," breaks in Tom, violently.
"Good to you because he loved you. You! Who wouldn't love you? Why, if it comes to that, you are ten times more bound to me, because I love you ten thousand times more than he ever did or could,"

All in a moment, sense returns to him, and with it knowledge of everlasting dishonour. He had belied his brother's love to her—he had laid bare his own love to her—he had—

She has covered her eyes with her hands.

"Vincent," says he-

"Oh!" she makes a little gesture and then suddenly bursts into bitter weeping. A sickening sense of fear overpowers him.

"Don't do that," entreats he, wildly. "Don't cry whatever you do. Think of your sight—only just restored. If—if I should be the one to undo all that—to send you back to darkness again—Vincent," as her sobs continue, "have pity on me if not upon yourself; forgive me. Do not be angry with me."

"Oh, I know," says she, trying to choke back her tears; "but I can't help it. You can see how it is. And why should I be angry with you, and what have I got to forgive? It is only that—I am bound to—him—in honour."

It is such a sweet, such an open, yet such an unintentional admission that Tom's heart seems to

stop beating, and his love for her, already so great, grows, if possible, deeper.

"So am I bound to him," says he, in a strangled tone. "Oh! Vincent," catching her hands and pressing them against his heart, "what a miserable world this is!"

"No, no. Not now!" says she, in the sweetest, faintest whisper. Somehow he knows, being her true lover, that it is not the opening of her eyes, but his love for her, however hopeless, that has made the world so sweet.

* * *

He has hardly left her when Madge creeps into the room.

"Well, darling," says she, and then "Your bandages off? Is that wise? But," with a sharp delight in her sister's recovery, "you can see me, plainly—quite plainly?"

"Yes," faintly.

"You," naïvely, "saw him too—plainly—quite plainly?"

"Yes," paling.

" And——"

"Oh, Madge, why go into it like this?" cries Vincent, with a sudden touch of uncontrollable anguish. "There is nothing. There can be nothing between us for ever! I have told his brother that—that I would marry him."

"But if you love Tom?"

"Still there is my promise."

"Oh, what nonsense!" cries Madge, who really doesn't seem to have any principles to speak of. "Are you going to make Tom and yourself and Cedric—unhappy, because of a promise you gave when you could not even see?"

" Cedric!"

"Certainly Cedric! Why he is bound to be the unhappiest of all."

"No, no. That will be in my hands, and—I won't listen to your sophistry, Madge. I know I am doing right. Could I face life again, having been false to the promise I gave him who had been so kind, so sweet, so good to me in every way when I was so stricken? It was an unfortunate promise," says she, sadly, "but of the kind that once given cannot be revoked."

"All I can say is," declares Madge, "that if J had promised ten times over to marry someone before Victor asked me, I'd send all my promises to the winds and marry him."

"It is all so different," says Vincent, sighing.
"I was blind and he pitied me. No one could pity
you! Is not gratitude a strong bond? I shall be
true to my word, Madge, until he himself tells me
he no longer wishes me to keep to it."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"Trembling lips,

Turned to such grief that they say bright words sadly."

SAD and disheartened, Tom plunges on his way home through the dripping woods. Some heavy showers had fallen of late, and the leafless branches now drop mournfully upon his head. Nature to-day is scarcely less desolate than his own thoughts, and so lost, indeed, is he in his melancholy reflections, that it is by a severe effort only he brings himself back to the present, and the voice of one of the grooms from The Elms.

"Beg pardon, sir, but the master came home an hour ago, and sent me to find you." Tom stands staring at Brown, who is quite an old friend, as if he had never seen him before. So Cedric has come home then, and wants to see him.

"Go back and say that I am coming," says he. And, indeed, scarcely another quarter of an hour elapses before he reaches the house, and is ushered into Cedric's sanctum.

For a full minute the two brothers stand face to face, without a word being uttered between them. Then, the tension growing intolerable, Tom breaks out:

"You sent for me?"

"Yes. I want to learn the truth; to know how it has been with you all these past weeks. All these weeks, counting from the day when we both saw Vincent for the first time!"

"With me?" It is impossible to misunderstand the question that Cedric is asking, standing there on the hearth-rug, with his strange, mystical eyes bent on his brother's. Fight against their influence as hard as he can, Tom is not proof against it, and now he knows he is standing in some sort of sense guilty before his brother. His eyes sink to the ground.

"Yes. All these past weeks," repeats Cedric. He pauses. "All that time you loved her? Is that true?"

To Tom it seems as though he is standing over him like a condemning judge. He bows his head.

Is he going to reproach him? To cast him out for

All at once he feels a hand upon his shoulder.

"Tom, be frank with me. Let us see this thing out together. Let us get at the root of it," says Cedric, gently, yet with a touch of sternness new to him. "You do love her?"

"I have told you," says Tom, huskily.

"For how long?"

"I have told you that too!-ever since I first saw her."

Cedric stands back.

"I wish you had told me sooner," says he, heavily.

"How could I?" cries Tom, breaking out almost fiercely. "You had spoken! She had accepted you—It was you she—she seemed to—to——" he falters.

"No, don't say it! It was you she loved," says Cedric, coldly.

"You must be mad to talk like that," begins Tom; but his brother checks him.

"It is now I am sane," says he. "It is now only the truth is clear to me. Through all, even though our voices are so fatally alike, it was you she loved. When she saw you——" he stops. There is an eloquent silence, and then, "You have seen her?"

"To-day for the first time, since-"

" And she?---"

"What am I to answer?—What am I to say?" exclaims Tom, in an anguished tone. "And, after all, how can she know? How can she be sure? Are we not both strangers to her?"

"She knew!" says Cedric, as if finally. He

sighs. "Well, it is all over," says he.

Tom's heart is conscious of a violent throb of joy. What do his words imply? Is it renunciation? . . . Then all at once a sense of shame overpowers him.

"How do you mean?" stammers he. But Cedric, who has begun to pace up and down the room, does not hear him.

"Yes. It is all over!" says he again. "She would never, perhaps, have really cared for me. Even had she remained sightless, and now—What could I do for her now? I thought to protect her; but now she needs no protection, and even if she did, it is to you she would turn for it!"

In spite of the gentleness of his manner, a little

tinge of bitterness runs through his tone, and Tom, as if unable to bear it, turns away, and covers his face with his hands. In a moment Cedric is beside him

"Look here, Tom, old fellow. You must not fret about it," says he, quickly. "It is all for the best, believe me."

"The best for me!" says Tom. "But for you—"

"For me too. I shall now," a great light springs into his eyes, "I shall now be free to undertake the work I have longed for all my life."

"The work?" says Tom, facing him.

"I mean to take orders, and go abroad as a missionary."

There is something so spiritual, so full of calm joy, in his whole air, that Tom is silenced for the moment. And now, when he would have spoken, Cedric, as though he has read his thoughts, stops him.

"You think it is a sacrifice," says he, smiling. "Put that out of your head at once. It is the dream of my life. I confess that for awhile another dream pushed it out of sight; but I know now that this is the real one. You were right, Tom, when you said once—do you remember?—that I did not know what love meant; the earthly love—the other——"he pauses, and Tom, with all the old affection for his brother surging up again in his heart, comes to him, and lays his hands upon his shoulders.

"The other—the higher!" says he, in a low tone, "is—yours!"

Cedric makes a gesture of dissent, and a rather pained expression on his face warns Tom to pursue the subject no further. Praise or admiration of any sort to Cedric, whose mind has always run on ascetic lines, means misery, and, after that, penitence and prayer. If he had been born in the mediaval ages, he would certainly have been canonized, and held up to all time as a roseate specimen of a monk—as saintly as he was beautiful.

Being born, however, in more material days, he now most unselfishly begins to think of Tom's material interests.

"As to her future, and yours, Tom, I have thought out that. I think it was for that I went away; to think of it, I mean. I shall speak to Mr. Grace. I shall make it all right with him. This property—I shan't want it. You may call it yours from this day."

All the coals of fire he has ever heard of seem to be descending on Tom's head.

"Cedric! once for all," says he, passionately; "I won't hear of that. Am I to rob you of the woman you—you love—for you do love her in your own way, in spite of all you have said—and of yourmoney, too? No; I shall never consent to that."

"Then the Squire will not consent, either," with a whimsical smile. "The loaves and fishes, as you know, are very dear to him. And consider, dear fellow! As I shall never marry, you may as well have a little before your time—when I can enjoy your enjoyment of it—some of what must come to you later. I shan't want it."

"You forget your work," says Tom, gravely.

"Not I! I shall keep for that over and above what I shall want; there are those investments, you know—and other things. And, after all, what is my work, Tom? Is not part of it to make happy the two people I love best in the world? 'Charity,' as the old Scotch proverb has it, 'begins at home,' though, as it very wisely goes on to say, 'should na end there.' I agree with it. Come! I shall go up to The Court this moment, and make it all right with the Squire."

And he was as good as his word. He did make it "all right with the Squire." So right, indeed, that when Tom arrived at The Court two days afterwards-a little uncertain, and considerably depressed, he found himself received with open arms; arms, however, into which, metaphorically or otherwise, he declined to throw himself. The thought of Cedric's surrender-his sacrifice-was still making his heart sore, and yet-to refuse the sacrifice he knew would be useless-as the love Cedric bore Vincent would be insufficient for her; and besides, she did not love him. Cedric had written her the kindest, tenderest letter, resigning all claim to her. It breathed of perfect affection -yet there was something in it that told the girl, into whose heart a first touch of passion had just entered-that he had not in reality loved her as poor mortals would be loved. It was balm to her heart-that had been reproaching her, vilifying her, for what she had insisted on calling her

treachery to him. And it was balm to Tom as well, though it was many days before he either heard of it, or read it.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"What do you think of marriage?"

"Hail, love! first love, thou word that sums all bliss!"

"And so everyone is going to be married," says the Squire, disgustedly, to Mrs. Egerton, Batty, and Janet; presumably the last two, but they are not listening to him. Mrs. Egerton is, whilst winding up a huge ball of wool, intended for mufflers for the poor around her during the coming cold season. Mrs. Egerton is great on mufflers.

"Oh, not everyone! Vincent and Tom, of course! By-the-bye, he has just arrived, you know, and is going to see her for the first time since poor Cedric withdrew his claim. Very honourable of him to stay so long away, wasn't it? But I always thought dear Tom charming! So sad for poor Cedric, but very wise of Cedric, as she certainly—never cared for him. Well, what were we talking of? Oh, yes. Not everyone, my dear John. Vincent and Tom, and Madge and dear Victor. That's all."

"Dear Tom, and dear Victor!" petulantly. "How dear they are. And how many more would you have? That's all, indeed. I wonder you don't suggest that baby Janet—and Batty."

"Janet—Batty," murmurs Mrs. Egerton, as if thinking out something. She is a born matchmaker, and can't help it. Matchmakers are much to be envied in spite of all that is said against them. Their lives are full of excitement.

"Or William Eyre," continued the Squire, who has taken no notice of her pause.

"William," she is silent again for a moment, and the Squire fails to notice how she stops at Colonel Eyre's Christian name. "Well—why not?" says she, quite suddenly. Then, all at once, as if horrified at her own tone, that has been perhaps a little decided, she colours violently, and begins to wind up her wool with an immense accession of vigour.

"Why not? What d'ye mean, Henrietta?"

"Nothing. Nothing."

"Pshaw! as if I couldn't see through you women. There is something—and what's the

matter with you, eh? Your face is as red as that wool. Come, out with it. What's this about Eyre? What's that idiot going to do?"

"Really. John—" with excessive dignity, "I fail to see where the word idiot comes in."

"Do you? All you women think every man an angel."

"Not every man!" says Mrs. Egerton, now preparing to remove herself and her wool from the room. "For example, I am sure, John, I have never thought of you as one!"

"Happy to hear it," snarls the Squire. "But, I say, Henrietta. Stop! where are you going? Don't go yet. You haven't told me, you know,"

— The Squire is a confirmed gossip. "You haven't told me about Eyre. What's he going to do, ch? Not going to marry, anyway, I hope."

"His hope is very far removed from yours at any rate," says Mrs. Egerton, pausing reluctantly on her way to the door. "Because he intends to marry almost immediately."

"What!" roars the Squire. "Eyre! going to be married! A confirmed bachelor as he has been calling himself for years! Come back, Henrietta," as she once more, and with increased speed, makes for the door. "Come back, I say. What old fool is going to marry him?"

This really is too much! Mrs. Egerton turns round, her face a thing of wrath.

"I am that old fool," says she, with a glance that freezes him to his very heart's core.

He sees her disappear through the doorway, and in a flash he feels how terrible his life will be without her. No one can manage the cook—a fiery Irishwoman, an incomparable chef—but Mrs. Egerton. His favourite soups, therefore, his little souffiés—the occasional ragoûts in which his soul delights—all—all will go with Henrietta.

"Good gracious—if *she* marries what's going to become of me!" says he, speaking out loud in the extremity of his despair. Suddenly it has come home to him that women are of *some* importance after all.

"Why, you'll have me, papa," says Janet, tripping forward.

"Goodness protect me!" groans the Squire.

"Jane, you forget!" says Batty, austerely, who has followed her, and is now regarding her with a threatening eye. "You have promised to accept my mother's invitation to return with me to Ireland,

there to 'view the landscape o'er,' with another view in prospect that need not be looked into now."

"Oh! don't be stupid," says Janet, lifting an ungrateful shoulder against him; "of course I know what you mean. You are always harping on that one *silly* subject. But," promptly, and with considerable disdain, turning her back upon him, "who on earth would marry you?"

"Why you!" retorts Mr. O'Grady, totally undamped; "when you come to——"

"My senses, perhaps?" wrathfully.

"Oh, no! really you know I wasn't going to say that," there is suspicion, yes, embarrassment, in Mr. O'Grady's air. "One can think things—but to say them—— No—no—far be it from me! You oughtn't to be so hard upon yourself, my dear.

What I was going to say was, that when you come to years of discretion, you——"

But the rest is lost in the din of the battle royal that ensues!

But here in this dimly lighted room, no sound of wordy war may be heard. Nor does there come any faintest echo from the world outside to kill the tender silence of the growing evening.

As he opens the door softly and comes in she rises, and holds out to him her small white trembling hands.

"Oh, Tom! Oh, Tom! To think that after

He falls on his knees before her.

"My beloved! My darling!" whispers he. "It seems too much happiness!"

THE END.

EVENING AT KILLARNEY.

STILL was the air amid the silver pines, Sweet to the lips as Hebe's magic wines, Soft to the cheek as love's first timid kiss That seeks, half doubting, for a promised bliss.

Above, the amber clouds were floating by, Across that pale, pale green that tints the sky When evening falls; bright children of the west, Seeking in night's soft arms to take their rest.

The calm of vespers with its solemn power— The tender quiet of the evening hour— Was brooding o'er the lake, where shimmering lay The golden waters in the sunlit bay. And slowly, 'mid the hush of changing lights, A crimson flush crept o'er the purple heights, And subtle mists of rose and pearly-grey Touched each dark rock and stole its gloom away.

The western sky was flaming gold and red, For pillowed soon would be the sun-god's head; Yet still he lingered at the gates of day, On earth's sweet lips his "good-night" kiss to lay.

Still glowing 'neath his touch, in pensive mood, The blushing earth in all her beauty stood: Then, with a sigh, her misty veil she drew Across her face, and hid the blush from view.

Annie I., Knowles.

STORIES OF SOME FAMOUS PICTURES.

II.—THE THREE GREAT MASTERS OF THE NETHERLANDS.

By Kineton Parkes.

N my previous paper in this series I dealt with the three bright particular stars in the firmament of Italian art, the rising and setting of which followed each other until the last was wholly obscured. In dealing with the great age of Dutch and Flemish painters a like phenomenon is noticeable, for Rubens, Van Dyck, and Rembrandt were contemporaries. It is highly interesting and instructive to note this, for it is not only important from an artistic, but also from a sociological point of view. We find in the history of nations, that national prosperity culminated in a great glow of artistic or literary production, and this splendour is, at its zenith, maintained for a while, but at length begins to wane, and a decay, quick or slow, but sure sets in, and the nation descends from its high estate.

As Italy declined, so did Holland and Belgium from their former supremacy, the latter, however, some two centuries or more after the former; for as the process of decay set in over Italy, the commercial prosperity of the Netherlands was becoming pre-eminent in Europe. The Dutch ships sailed the waters of the world, and the Dutch merchants amassed wealth and culture, and eventually cultivated leisure. The arts began to flourish and painting became an honourable and lucrative profession. The society of artists was sought for eagerly on all sides, and the opulent merchants vied with their monarchs in placing their wealth in the hands of the painters in return for their pictures. The painters, for their part, were men of wide culture, and frequently men of affairs as well: they travelled; they lived in foreign courts; and often they were entrusted with important diplomatic commissions.

Typical of such was Peter Paul Rubens, who was born at Siegen, in Nassau, in 1577, on the 29th June. He was naturally equipped for a scholar, and his bent for languages helped him

largely in the acquirement of an amount of general knowledge, such as few painters, ancient or modern, have been privileged to possess. It was the possession of this faculty that resulted in the work which he did outside the sphere of the artist: work which his transcendent powers as a painter have practically, almost totally, eclipsed. But it was also largely due to these accomplishments of his that he was able to introduce into his art much that had previously been omitted by exponents of the arts. Michel Angelo was a poet, and Da Vinci a scientist: but while the latter's art suffered on account of his science perhaps, the art of Rubens does not seem to have suffered because its creator was an excellent man of public affairs. This art permits of only one cavil, that it is essentially coarse and often devoid of grace; but the splendid masculinity of it, the strong forms and the unfettered life and naturalism render its appeal of the strongest; while the correctness, even in its limitations, and its glorious and permanent colour, render it a wonder to all succeeding generations of artists. The fecundity of the genius of Rubens was immense, and a morning spent in the great gallery of the Louvre, where so many of the huge canvasses of the master hang, fills one with wonder, even if it fails to satisfy a feeling for a chaster outline, born of a later and, as we think, a better and finer taste. The robustness of some of his depicted forms is quite repellent to many observers of to-day; but his other qualities are amply sufficient to balance this defect. His masters were men well able to teach him the technique of their art, and from Van Noort and from Vænius he rapidly learned his craft-so rapidly, that in his twentieth year he was admitted a member of the celebrated guild of painters at Antwerp. Soon afterwards he went to Italy to study the great masters there. His success was uninterrupted and very rapid. He made friends



ÉCHANGE DES DEUX PRINCESSES SUR LA RIVIÈRE D'ANDAYE, By Rubens.

wherever he went and was always in demand. Early, the great ones of the earth heard of him and solicited his attention. He was exceedingly well favoured, and was a social success in all directions. The Queen of France and the Kings of England and Spain heaped honours upon him, and his work for Charles I. is well-known in England, and, we are glad to know, was amply rewarded. His life was a complete triumph, and he died at Antwerp in 1640, admired by all, and regretted, not only by his innumerable friends, but by the whole world.

Among the most famous of the great works which Rubens undertook, was the decoration of the Palace of the Luxembourg, commissioned by Marie de Medicis. From about 1620 to 1625 he was engaged on this undertaking. There were to be twenty-one huge pictures, depicting the recent history of the French nation. Even while engaged upon this stupendous task his energies were employed in other directions—in painting altar pieces and large pictures for churches. Of course, his scholars were responsible for the laying down of the ground, and all preliminary work of that description, but the amount of work the artist must have accomplished with his own hand was enormous.

The mixture of Pagan and Christian ideas in many of the works of Rubens may be well seen in the Luxembourg series, and the "Apotheosis of Henri IV." is a good example of this trait.

Greatest of all those scholars who thronged to the studio of Rubens, at Antwerp, was Anthony Van Dyck, who was born in that city on the 22nd March, 1599. It is said that one of Rubens' pictures having by accident been rubbed while in a moist condition, the rest of the students implored Van Dyck to paint in again the obliterated parts. This he did, and Rubens observing the canvas the next day pointed out to the assembled and trembling young men the excellency of the very parts that Van Dyck had painted. The truth came out, however, and Rubens, with his characteristic generosity, complimented his scholar, and from that moment, seeing his greatness, watched his career with solicitude, and did all in his power to further its success.

Van Dyck's history was an eventful one. At the court of Charles I, he did as the courtiers did; was lavish in his expenditure, and had many love passages. He was knighted by Charles, but when

money at the Court was scarce, Van Dyck was in difficulties, for he was not paid for the work he accomplished.

The number of celebrated personages painted by Sir Anthony Van Dyck is extraordinary. He painted thirty-six of King Charles I. alone, of which we give one from the Windsor collection, and twenty-five of Queen Henrietta Maria. Perhaps his finest work is to be found in the King Charles series. By far the greatest number of Van Dyck's works are portraits, but he also painted some religious and a few historical subjects.

Rembrandt van Riin was born at Levden on July 15th, 1607. He was the son of a prosperous miller. He, unlike Rubens, had no taste for literary studies, turning aside from them to indulge his precocious inclinations for drawing and design. After being taught by Van Swanenburg in his native town, which was then only second in importance to Amsterdam itself, he passed to the latter city, and became the pupil of Peter Lastman, although there were masters greater in renown then teaching there. But Rembrandt seems to have learned little from his masters. His innate genius seems to have helped him to the proper understanding of the works of art he saw around him, and from these object-lessons he appears to have taught himself; for, after staying but a very little while with Lastman, he returned to Leyden, where he sojourned seven years. At the close of this period, at the earnest solicitations of his friends and would-be patrons, he returned to Amsterdam, and here practically the rest of his busy life was spent. In an otherwise uneventful career, there are two matters which are of great importance to the student of Rembrandt. The first, his marriage to the beautiful Saskia van Ulenburgh; the second, his most unfortunate bankruptcy. To his marriage we owe a very large number of beautiful works in painting and in etching, for Saskia was the inspiration, and often the model, of some of the artist's finest works. His bankruptey was due, not to extravagant living, but to the fact that he spent more than his income in the purchase of examples of art, from which he studied, and by which study we are so much the better and richer, for it helped Rembrandt to give us the beautiful works which are now so cherished by the world. The bankruptcy made the artist very



CHARLES I. By VAN DYCK. (From the Windsor Collection.)

miserable, but, strange to say, his subsequent work does not seem to have suffered, for its virility is not lessened, and its quality is as fine as the work he accomplished before the crisis. He died on October 8th, 1669, and his works live after him.

It is a long series which leads up at last to the magnificent piece of work here illustrated, "The Sortie of Banning Cock." Commencing in 1627, we have portraits, landscapes, religious subjects, and genre following each other in rapid succession. The year 1632 yields no less than thirty painted pictures, and there are other years which are only slightly less prolific. The list closes in 1668, to which period belong four of the several portraits of himself which the artist painted. Then to these must be added the great series of etchings which alone would have rendered Rembrandt immortal, but of which we cannot now speak for want of space.

"The Sortie" belongs to the year 1642, when Rembrandt was at the height of his power and fame, and when all things were brightest for him, until all was darkened by the death of his beloved wife, Saskia. It was his annus mirabilis, but also his year of sorrow. The correct title of the great picture just referred to is " The Sortie of the Company of Captain Frans Banning Cock," but for many years it was always known as "The Night Watch "or "The Amsterdam Musketeers"; but the picture does not represent a watch or a night scene. The impression that it was the latter was obtained from the fact that the painting had at one time been very much obscured by repeated oilings and varnishings, and, in 1758, it was carefully cleaned and the shield on which were inscribed the names of those persons whose portraits are found in the picture was discovered. The picture is a portrait group, after the fashion which was common in the days when it was painted, but with a difference. The civic guards had often been painted before, but the method employed by Rembrandt was something fresh in the way of portraiture. Here we have portraits of men in action, and the captain, his lieutenant, his standard-bearer and the members of his company are issuing, pell-mell, from the guard-room to answer a summons from without. The picture was not considered satisfactory at the time it was finished, but it is now regarded as the artist's masterpiece of painting, and one of the finest pieces of technical workmanship in all art.

One great characteristic is supposed to belong

to each of the great men we have been briefly considering, and although it seems a little futile to thus single out one quality from so many which were wholly excellent, yet, for many purposes, these traits of the work of each artist are by no means useless. To Rubens is accorded the great gift of colour; to Vandyck, pre-eminence in portraiture; and to Rembrandt the perfecting of chiaroscuro, or the absolute understanding of the laws of light and shade. These are three qualities of immense worth, and the conception of their value may best be ascertained from the study of them in the work of these three artists. To the student of art, and to the lover of art, here is the fountain-head from which these sweet waters flow, and here we may drink and be satisfied.

The religious feeling which so stimulated both patron and painter during the golden days of Italian art is quite absent in the art of the period with which we are now concerned. The Reformation which took place in the interval between the decline of the one and the rise of the other had altered men's conception of religion altogether, and the Catholic faith, strong as it was, had lost that supremacy which dominated the minds of all menwhatever their capacity and whatever their vocation. The Dutch School certainly painted many religious subjects, and some of the greatest pictures of Rubens, Van Dyck, and Rembrandt were of this class, but in them the old feeling is absent. The incentive to paint them is different; the spiritual necessity which impelled the artists of Florence, Rome, and Genoa, is unfelt by the artists of the Netherlands. The domination of the "Virgin and Child" is lost, and this domination it was which formed the nucleus of all Italian religious painting. The religious painting of the Netherlands is no less religious essentially, but it is accomplished in a different way and under differing conditions. It consists for the most part of scenes and episodes from the Bible, whereas the pictures of the Italian masters owed their inspiration to creed and dogma to an almost exclusive extent. What concerns us here, however, is not so much the source of inspiration, as the result obtained. As painting, the Dutch School loses nothing in comparison with the Italian. As far as technique is concerned, it stands even higher, but the more recent school had an enormous advantage, which its predecessor could not have, in that its masters were able to study and



THE NIGHT WATCH. By REMBRANDT,

profit by the work of their great predecessors. Here they had a magnificent object-lesson, and it would be little to their credit if they had not succeeded in making advances, at any rate, upon the mechanical side of the art which they practised in common.

The heyday of Flemish and Dutch painting was the first half of the seventeenth century, that glorious hundred years in which so much of the noblest art and literature of Europe was produced. From 1600 to 1669, when Rembrandt died, as we have seen, were produced the greatest works of this school, works which have never been surpassed by their kind. Portraits, allegory and genre, were the subjects with which this great art dealt most largely, but landscape and seascape also were treated as they had never before been treated, by Van de Velde, Cuyp, Hobbema and Ruysdael, over all being the sway of the great genius of Rembrandt, exercising the influence which was never entirely lost while the school continued.



THE POET'S WORLD.

F all be true that poets sing Of far-off times and olden, If life was once eternal spring, And suns were always golden;

It once the world was sweet and young,
As in their tales they tell us,
When feet immortal roved among
The dewy vales of Hellas;

When hidden nymph and goddess glanced From every fountain flowing, In every dell the satyrs danced On flowers always blowing,

And shepherd Pan, beside the rills, Piped on from morn till even, Till Jove, upon the sunset hills, Shut to the gates of Heaven;

Ah, then, what ails the earth to-day
That gone is all the glory,
And only poets, in their lay,
Repeat the charmed story?

I know not; but would fain believe
The best of what they sing us
Is ours for ever to retrieve,
And earth's for aye to bring us,

Could each but learn the poet's part,
And pierce his way through sadness,
Deep to the everlasting heart
Of purity and gladness.

Till blossoms shall forget to burst,
Till birds shall cease their singing,
Till dews forsake the fields athirst,
And flowers tire of springing,

The world will still be young and sweet,
As in the ages olden,
And, while one poet's heart shall beat,
The sun be always golden.

MARGERET A: MOUR.

SOME CAT FRIENDS.

By MAXWELL GRAY,

" T'LL have the black one," I cried excitedly, when the printer's lad first presented to my enraptured gaze the basket containing Wynkyn de Worde and his brothers, all on their hind-legs, with their six fore-paws on the ledge, and their three miniature, maned lion-heads gazing with eager interest on the unfamiliar world of the roaring street. I refer to my latest loved, and alas! lost, darling; for to love a thing so frail as a cat is sooner or later to lose it. In this case it was sooner-sadly sooner; for Wynkyn, then the dearest, drollest little ball of bronzy-black fluff. had just completed his second month, and he still wanted four months to his second year when the earth beneath the lilac-tree closed over him, to the sorrow of all who were honoured even by his most distant acquaintance.

He was-that fatal was-a Persian of bluest blood and longest pedigree, descended on both sides from well-bred, prize-taking pussies. His father, Gordon, is a splendid silver tabby, devoted to his wife and family; his lady mother, a gentle and refined creature of the same bronzy-black hue as her lamented son, but with an inferior tail. Splendid as the family tails are, I really think that Wynkyn's outplumed them all. It was an intellectual tail, a refined and subtle tail, the graceful waving of which expressed the nicest shades of thought and emotion in its noble owner, who carried it with matchless grace and at the proper height, not waving it ostentatiously aloft, after the manner of some plebeians; nor yet unduly trailing it, as is the way of cats without proper selfrespect.

A haughty consciousness of his long descent, together with a due sense of noblesse oblige, distinguished Wynkyn's demeanour even in his lightest moments. Frivolous he never was; his very mirth was of that restrained and intellectual character which results in keen wit and refined humour. A certain gravity pervaded his drollest freaks; there was condescension in his funniest frolics. Young though he was when he met his tragic end, his keen and subtle intellect was highly developed; he bid fair to be a philosopher of no mean order, at an age when most cats are but just emerging from careless kittenhood, and have scarcely begun to reflect upon the

mysteries which surround them. Wynkyn's beautiful orange-golden eyes seemed to revolve and reflect, in their thoughtful and immeasurable depths, the profoundest problems of this mysterious universe. Young, gallant, and bright-eyed though he was, he recalled the blind old seër, Tiresias. shrouded in his mantle, and from hour to hour

"Inly revolving
The doom of Thebes,"

as he sat, "composed and bland," on a table at the window, his magnificent tail disposed in graceful plumy curves about him, his seal-furred paws pressed together, his splendid mane sweeping away over his shoulders and under his chin, and setting off his small, sweet, thoughtful black face. Wynkyn, at two months old, was secured, singularly enough, for just so much gold as was bestowed on his owner for the appearance of a sonnetneedless to say of priceless worth-in a magazine. I refrain from mentioning that sum or that magazine, for I hate to give pain even to the meanest creature; and that erring, but, let us trust, penitent editor, might see these pages. It is a singular coincidence that the same amount of filthy lucre should have power to purchase, i.e. to acquire the right to enjoy, two such absolutely invaluable things as Wynkyn de Worde and an immortal poem by his owner. Here is a puzzle for political economists. Under what definition of wealth or value would these two sources of purely immaterial enjoyment, purchased each by one and the same portion of the circulating medium, come? Did Wynkyn himself, in his profound meditations, ever propound to his inner consciousness and solve this problem?

His best affections were not given to his mistress; the first place in his guileless heart was occupied by his playfellow, a white, short-haired cat about half his size, though full-grown, the mother of many. Her he loved with an absolute devotion, proof against countless thrashings and swearings administered by Tiny during the Flegeljähre or wild-oats'-sowing time, through which the gifted and complex-natured Wynkyn of necessity passed. Never once did Wynkyn return blow or — language; he would simply lay back his ears and shut his eyes, while a storm of cuffs from a

sheathed white paw, accompanied by a volley or choicest feline Billingsgate, descended upon his devoted, and, too often, richly deserving, head, Before he arrived at months of discretion, Wynkyn was to the divinities of the hearth-rug as Loki to the Scandinavian gods. With unseasonable levity, he would break in upon Tiny's most solemn meditations on her duty to daily-expected kittens, upset the dignity proper to her situation by rolling her on her back, catching her up in his powerful arms and throwing her about, heedless of frantic and hysterical expostulations on the part of helpless Tiny, who would actually gasp and sob in the extremity of her indignation. The more poor Tiny spluttered and swore, the more bent was Wynkyn on his unholy mirth, so that on these important occasions when she went, as it were, into retreat, leaving awhile the active life for the contemplative, she could only preserve her constantly assaulted gravity by scolding and cutting Wynkyn whenever he approached her. But the moment kittens appeared, all was changed. They were confided at once to his care; Wynkyn realised the gravity of the situation, and dutifully applied himself to help his little friend in the discharge of her onerous duties. It was a beautiful friendship, and never marred by one moment's jealousy. Poor Rover was also the frequent subject of the youthful Wynkyn's practical jokes. A small, shaggy dog of a certain age and uncertain temper, enjoying his ease and wedded to the set habits so dear to elderly gentlemen, the sudden and unexpected apparition of a small and very wicked little black face close to his, as he lay dozing in his arm-chair. would drive him to the verge of distraction. Having snapped and snarled, and sent the intruder galloping away in simulated terror, Rover would, with muttered grumblings, again address himself to repose, haply omitting to tuck up his tail, which, just as he was sinking once more into blissful unconsciousness, would be seized and ignominiously flapped by a brown paw from a viewless cat beneath the chair. Having, with futile growls, safely picked up the tail, and betaken himself to a less exposed situation, poor Rover, seeing that Wynkyn was bent upon murdering sleep, would sit up on the alert, following with the tail of his eye the movements of the demure rogue, until, lulled by the latter's guile into a brief false security, he would wink cosily at the fire, lost in the contemplation of

his own virtues and accomplishments, which are many, blissfully unaware that a dark-furred creature, with mischievous golden eyes, was stealthily stalking upon his rear, until the final spring roused him to howls of execration, and futile snaps at the vanishing furred serpent.

Such were the youthful frailties of Wynkyn. For some time after his tragic end, Rover sat daily and begged, with drooping paws, for the return of his lost comrade.

Once arrived at the dignity of cathood, Wynkyn's mirth was exercised with due gravity and discretion, and he abstained with perfect tact and goodbreeding from untimely jokes and wrestlingmatches. The perfect confidence and friendship between himself and Tiny was henceforth ruffled only by occasional swears from the latter when her powerful friend squeezed her too tightly in his arms or dashed her too roughly to the ground in the excitement of their perpetual romps and races. Tiny, a cat of perfect good-breeding and polished, though somewhat haughty, manners, after two months' wandering, during which she ate the bread and drank the water of affliction, returning to the bosom of her family a mere shadow of her former plump and well-furred self, acquired the unbecoming habit of snatching at food; and would push the majestic Wynkyn, always a perfect gentleman, rudely from their common dish. Wynkyn, with noble forbearance, would sit down and wait till she had finished, pluming his splendid tail about him, and perhaps turning a half-amused, half-confidential, and always condescending, glance upon his mistress, who wondered that the little intelligent black face, coloured only by the golden eyes, could express so many shades of thought and feeling.

Wynkyn's once swearing is historical. It was in his first summer when his months numbered the principal winds. Food, such as his soul loved, being on the kitchen table in course of preparation, it occurred to Wynkyn to annex this. The morning was sultry, and just as the poor dear had mounted the table and was in the act of enjoying the coveted dainty, he was startled by a terrific peal of thunder. Much incensed at this interruption, he ran indignantly to the window and looked out to see what all the rumpus was about and remonstrate, when his ruffled nerves were assaulted by a second thunder-peal, accompanied by a

flash of lightning and hiss of down-rushing rain; whereupon, with wrathfully quivering mane and tail, and furiously blazing topaz eyes, he opened his atom of a mouth and swore stoutly. Having thus expressed his indignation and defiance, the small creature acquiesced with characteristic philosophy in the inevitable, and gravely returned to his nefarious occupation, undisturbed by the continuously crashing storm.

That same sorry jade, Care, reported to have killed the cat, twice went near to make a premature end of poor dear Winkie. On first leaving his parents and brothers his large heart nearly broke; he pined so sorely that he lost flesh, refused all food, and was given up for lost. As a last resource he was returned to the paternal basket in the printing office, where the first sight of the family whiskers revived him; he at once consented to share the paternal breakfast, and, after a few days spent in toying with his father's and mother's well-fringed tails and joining in the sports of his little brothers, he regained his health and spirits, and, with inborn philosophy, gradually reconciled himself to his new home and friends.

Six months before his tragic end, his mistress, having been confined for nearly a year to her room, where Wynkyn passed the greater part of his days and nights with her and Tiny, beguiling the heavy hours by his beauty, wit, and kindness, it was necessary to move her. It was, therefore, a serious trial to him, when, his mistress having been carried off, this room was dismantled, and the whole house gradually invaded by strange men, who knocked and hammered and cleared out refuge after refuge, upsetting the household order and decorum befitting the gravity and comfort of selfrespecting cats, till nothing was left but emptiness, and finally imprisoning the sedate Wynkyn's own majestic person in one basket, and that of the more volatile Tiny in another, and jolting both a mile away to a totally unfamiliar and unexplored house, where similar disorder and the unmannerly tramping and hammering of strange men continued for days. The effect on the two cats was diverse; the lighter and slighter disposition of Tiny was unduly excited by these events, and she disported herself with a frivolity unbecoming her age and responsibilities, on one occasion even flying up a chimney, whence she was ignominiously dragged by her tail. The profounder and more complex

nature of Wynkyn was, on the contrary, depressed to a pining melancholy; he refused food, made no jokes, and could not see Tiny's, but crept, moping and silent, into solitary corners, whence neither caresses nor choicest food could for some days beguile him. His speedy demise was sadly predicted; and it was not until a week later, when his mistress joined the family in the new house, and a proper routine was again observed, that he began again to rerceive the comedy of things feline, and responded with a grave smile to the onsets of Tiny's mad mirth. Neither cat once attempted to stray from the new home; their housemates once gathered round them, they found it a much more desirable abode than the old one, and did not hesitate to say so, in their charming way, both to each other and their mistress.

One advantage of their new dwelling, they said, was the prospect from the sunny bow-windows. Wynkyn became a connoisseur in sunsets, which he watched with interest night after night from his table in the window, evidently appreciating the motion of the coloured clouds and the blaze of changing light, which may have conveyed a sense of warmth to his small brain. Tiny does not care for sunsets; her observations are confined to things passing in the high-road; birds, and sheep in the meadows, particularly ewes with lambs. The two cats would sit solemnly side by side on the table for hours, their tails, one slim white and one plumy black, folded about their paws, turning their heads in such absorbed eagerness to follow the movements of people in the road, that they sometimes cannoned against each other, whereupon they would gravely apologise, perhaps exchange a graceful caress, and again resume their contemplation of life with unimpaired interest.

Thus it will be perceived that Wynkyn, unlike many sages and devotees of the contemplative life, was no hermit. Nothing, indeed, more clearly displays the perfect sanity of this cat's remarkable and many-sided intellect, than the manner in which he united the active with the contemplative life, preserving an exact balance between the exercise of his powers of abstract speculation and those of keen observation, probably deducing the abstract from the concrete during his profound meditations. Had Wordsworth come into the world late enough to take example by Wynkyn, what glorious poems

might have enriched our national literature. But he ran away and hid—like Wynkyn's lady mother at a cat show—closing his eyes to the absorbing spectacle of human life which afforded this gentle, long-robed philosopher such endless diversion and instruction.

On foggy or rainy days, when the road was empty, the meadows desolate, hill and forest thick with rain, and no pageant of sunset splendour sweeping over the wide heavens, Wynkyn gave himself wholly to meditation, deserting the window which gave him so witle an outlook into cosmic life, for the hearth-rug, where he lay entwined with Tiny, forming a mass of mingled velvet white and long silky bronze-black fur, or on the top of a cottage piano, which he would almost cover with the languid length of his imperial outstretched form. This latter eminence was a favourite resort in winter evenings; and there, I fancy, during the quiet hours in which his mistress pursued the fictive art -in which he showed much interest, often helping to correct proofswithin his sight, many of his subtlest theories were evolved.

"But is he allowed there?" was the observation of a visitor, who saw him majestically descend from the table at the falling of night, and as majestically ascend the piano, with those easy, effortless leaps that the stag and the antelope vainly emulate.

Invariably courteous to guests, Wynkyn permitted no familiarities, and only caressed especial friends. Very gently, but with a look of freezing disdain, he skook off the unpermitted touch from his flowing fur robes, haughtily averting his leonine head. When strangers met his approval, and his judgment of character was accurate and unerring, save when biassed by his aversion for tobacco, he accepted their caresses with a sweet but restrained graciousness, always conscious of the favour he conferred, sometimes gravely smiling; and, when he considered the acquaintance sufficiently ripe, bestowing caresses himself. Even cat-haters were captivated by the charm and polish of Wynkyn's manner.

People were sometimes startled to hear the door handle rattle on the outside till the door opened to permit the slow and stately entrance of a fine black cat, with sweeping silken fur and mane, and splendidly plumed tail, whose grave, golden glance expressed a kind condescension to the human race. But Wynkyn's strong and clever paw was not strong enough for really efficient locks; these he was obliged to rattle till people, after losing their temper with futile "Come in's," opened. Too long has his mistress dwelt lovingly upon Wynkyn's lost charms, yet all too briefly to touch on half his virtues, gifts, and graces. What he was to her through long days and longer nights of suffering and exhaustion. can never be told, much less understood, by those ignorant of months of captivity with teine forte et dure. Nor was Wynkyn's short life too short for him to be endeared to her because of hands, for ever cold, that stroked him; and voices, for ever silent, that praised the witchery of his wit and beauty.

It was on one fatal evening, when the lilacs were budded, that Wynkyn broke through his usual rule, and watched the splendour of the sun's setting, not from the safe upper bow-window, but, alas! from the front garden. A dog fiend-a large black retriever-whether from native iniquity, or spurred by the wanton brutality of hobbledehoys in his company-leapt the gate. Poor Wynkyn flew round the house and in at the back door; a thumping against a closed door was heard, but no cry. The dog fiend had science, and one shake of the cruel jaws probably did it, for the dear, little, dead face had no look of pain or even terror. A friend meeting the fierce beast careering down the road with Wynkyn in his mouth, gave instant chase, fought for and rescued the body, which, with tears in his eyes, he brought, a mere limp and helpless mass of silken fur, to poor Wynkyn's distressed family.

One grip of a dog's jaw quenched Wynkyn's joyous and joy-giving life. How? Biologists may say that the snapping of the spinal cord, or the paralysis of the medulla oblongata, for ever destroyed the connections between that controlling organ, Wynkyn's brain, and his every muscle and nerve. But where and what is the controller? What and where is the subtle, intangible principle that made the difference between a small, curd-like substance, rapidly corrupting, and a living, vitalising organ, whence emanated desire, will, and force, and which directed, consciously and unconsciously, every motion of the complex organs and members dependent on it? What and where is the spirit of

infinite mirth and active humour, of love and also hate, of observation, of reflection, of desire, of will, which animated this lithe, graceful, furred creature? All this annihilated by a dog's jaw. All that beautiful, joyous, and manifold life buried with the silken fur and quenched golden eyes under the lilac-tree.

Mystery of mysteries is life, with its shadow and apparent end, death; an illimitable, unplumbed ocean, over which speculation and conjecture drift helmless and unpiloted.

But Wynkyn was only a cat, you object. Only a fellow-guest at the great banquet of life; only a companion and friend in his limited way to a spirit

also limited and imprisoned by incomprehensible animal conditions. Much graceful gaiety, sweet affection, and harmless pleasure were extinguished by the wanton savagery of the brute-boy or man who set on the dog-fiend; the vanishing of the small dark form, which seemed in its shadow-hued fur a very embodiment of mystery and occult wisdom, has left a blank. The lilac flowers have poured all their sweetness over Wynkyn's grave; the white pinks have shed their spiced odours there, and the summer roses are nearly done, but the topaz lights of the inscrutable eyes are still hourly missed. Poor Wynkyn was not the least charming and gifted of my cat friends.





II.-LONDON PLAYGROUNDS.

BY EDWIN OLIVER.

HE Londoner has always been a pleasureloving soul. Through all the vicissitudes which go to make up the chequered history of our great city, we see him rising, phonix-like, from the ashes of past miseries, with a new song in his heart, and a fresh conviction that life is worth living. Fire, famine, and pestilence, have not quenched this zest for sport. The spirit has dwelt in him from the far Plantagenet days, when he cudgelled his brother 'prentice in Moorfields, or sallied forth to see his betters tilt in the lists of Smithfield. It thrived in the broader light of Elizabethan culture when his palate found relish in the pleasures of stage and pageant. And it still lives robust and fresh in the heart of Modern Cockayne, as the days of St. Lubbock amply testify.

In the early centuries, when the city walls closed like a nest around its small community, the Londoner's playground was everywhere. The great woodlands stretched around him, where he gathered flowers for the floral triumphs of May-day; without the gates were moorlands and playing-fields, where he skated on the shallow ponds, or sought the refined pastimes of bull-baiting, cock-fighting, and single-stick. No need then to wrest from jealous vestries the few stunted acres of open space that remain to us: the wide, free country spread itself before him with scarce a hedge or gate to say him nay.

As the city grew, and sucked the outlying villages and hamlets into its greedy maw, the tastes of the denizens took new shape, and sought the more artificial pleasures which a great town engenders. The distinguishing feature of the eighteenth century is the pleasure-garden, of which there were many examples, mostly on the same pattern, but varying in the tone of the frequenters of them. The best known of these were Vauxhall, Ranelagh, the Bermondsey Spa Gardens, the Marylebone Gardens, and Bagnigge Wells. If we pay a visit to the first and most select, we shall gain a fairly accurate idea of them all. Vauxhall is the same as the Spring

Gardens, Lambeth, mentioned by Evelyn as a "pretty-contrived plantation." Charles II.'s "Master of Mechanics," Sir Samuel Morland, adapted it to the requirements of the giddy court by building a fine concert-room, with mirrored walls and fountains. In the gardens were curious contrivances, representing a bridge with a mail-coach passing over it,

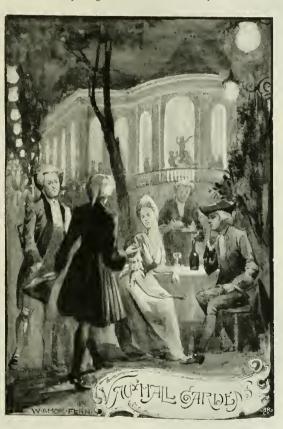
a water-mill, an artificial cascade, mechanical figures that sat outside a cottage smoking and drinking, strange musical sounds that issued from the earth. panegyrist in the Spectator terms it "a sort of Mahometan paradise," and dwells upon "the fragrancy of the walks and bowers, with the choirs of birds that sing upon the trees, and the loose tribe of people that walked under their shades." The gardens consisted of covered walks, over which were suspended illumination lamps on gala nights, to the number of twenty thousand. The orchestra

was stationed in a quadrangular grove; a high tower was used for the display of fireworks, and for Madame Saqui's descent along several hundred feet of rope, amid a shower of fire.

Much mention is made of Vauxhall in the works of such writers as Pepys, Horace Walpole, Addison, Fielding, and Goldsmith. The latter speaks of it as combining rural beauty with courtly magnificence. Sir John Fielding, the novelist's brother, commends it for "its elegant eatables and drinkables, in which particular Vauxhall differs widely from the prudish and abstemious Ranelagh, where one is confined to tea and coffee." His opinion was not shared by the careful city father who took his wife and

daughters there. So upset was he by the extortionate charges for the fragile wafers of ham, that with each mouthful he kept ejaculating, "There goes twopence! There goes threepence! There goes a groat!" But the ubiquitous Horace gives us some of the brightest pictures of the gardens. The following is an extract from a description of a visit he paid there with Lady Petersham's party. "Here we picked up Lord Granby, arrived verv drunk from Ienny Whim's (a tavern between Chelsea and Pimlico). At last we assembled in our

bled in our booth, Lady Caroline in the front with the vizor of her hat erect, and looking gloriously handsome. . . . We mineed seven chickens into a china dish, which Lady Caroline stewed over a lamp with three pats of butter and a flagon of water, stirring, and rattling, and laughing. She had brought Betty, the fruit-girl, with hampers of strawberries and cherries, from





Rogers, and made her wait upon us. . . . In short, the air of our party was sufficient, as you will easily imagine, to take up the whole attention of the Gardens; so much so, that from eleven o'clock to half an hour after one. we had the whole concourse round our booth, . . . It was three o'clock before we got home." This was in the palmy days: although Vauxhall was not finally closed till 1859, it had for many years fallen into utter disrepute, and become as shabby as its plebeian patrons. old order has changed once more, and these al fresco haunts are now as dead as the macaronies and powdered dames who lent lustre to them.

But we still have some noble playgrounds left to us by the Contracting Ogre—fresh oases in a desert of brick. The parks have been aptly termed "the lungs of London"—green, gracious spaces, with broad sweeps of meadow land and gaily nodding trees—remnants of old priories and royal hunting-grounds. The site which our chief park now occupies originally formed the ancient manor of Hyde, bequeathed to the

Abbots of Westminster by Geoffrey de Mandeville, a Norman lord, for the peace of his soul. Here the merry monks fattened their bullocks and hunted the crane and wild fowl in the small stream of Eyeburn, or in the fenny pools of the valley, which now forms the misnamed Serpentine. But the iron hand of Thomas Cromwell fell heavily upon this episcopal Eden, and Hyde went to swell the King's game preserves, which now comprised a circuit of nearly all the open country from St. James's to Gospel Oak. Its wooded glades rang to the sound of many a royal hunt in the reign of his daughter, Queen Bess, and in that of her successor.

It was left to Charles the Martyr to first throw



open this portion of the King's lands as a place of public resort. But this boon was heavily discounted at the fall of the crown. The Parliament of the people had need of funds, and met their difficulty by putting the parks up for auction.





Hyde was sold in three lots to private individuals for some twenty thousand pounds. These "sordid fellows," to quote Evelyn, still permitted the populace to use the grounds, but with reservations; on great occasions they levied a toll, to the extent of a crown, on every vehicle that entered. It was at this time much used for race meetings and sports of all kinds, which were frequently honoured by the presence of Cromwell himself and his Privy Council. Pepys mentions a visit to Hyde Park, where he saw "a fine foot race three times round the park, between an Irishman and Joseph Crow, that was once my Lord Claypole's footman." The Lord Protector had a narrow escape of his life here when, with his usual masterfulness, he tried to drive a team of six. They were a fresh set of grey Friesland coach-horses-a gift from the Duke of Holstein-and Cromwell was but a sorry whip. His rough treatment roused the mettlesome steeds to a stampede, which ended in the trap being overturned and the illustrious driver thrown out. His pistol went off in his pocket, but, strangely enough, he came out of the affair unhurt. A contemporary quaintly hopes that by the accident "he might have been instructed how dangerous it was to meddle with those things wherein he had no experience."

"The sordid fellows" received the same treatment as their predecessors, the monks; they vanished with the Protectorate, and Hyde once more became a national heritage. The reflex of the Golden Days fell generously upon it; it put on gay apparel, it rose in social status, it became the fashion. The Ring, an open meadow on the north of the Powder Magazine, was the rendezvous of the stars of beauty and the cream of the gilded court. The origin of the exclusion of hackney coaches from the park is connected with this select spot. The Post Boy for June 8th, 1695, has the following item :- "Several persons of quality having been affronted at the Ring by some of the persons that rode in hackney-coaches with masks, and complaint thereof being made to the Lord Justices, an order is made that no hackney-coaches be permitted to go into the said park, and that none presume to appear there in masks."

The only other attempt to curtail the freedom of the parks was made by Queen Caroline, consort



of the second George. Her pet mania was to beautify the open spaces around the Palace, and attach them to the already liberal boundaries of Kensington Gardens. It is to her acquisitiveness that we owe the fine lake of the Serpentine. Previously it was merely an uncultivated marsh. broken by eleven pools, and watered by the Westbourne, a rivulet rising in Hampstead, and flowing through Bayswater to the Thames. Her idea was to convert this swamp into a broad sheet of water. and to make it a further attraction to her private grounds together with the three hundred acres she had already shorn the Park of. This important alteration was completed in the space of three years, the water being supplied by the Westbourne until as late as 1834, when the tributary became so impure from contamination with the neighbouring drainage as to necessitate its being cut off, and converted into a sewer. Oueen Caroline's ravages would probably have gone further, had they not been checked by a smart reply from Sir Robert Walpole. On being asked by her what it would cost to turn St. James's Park into a garden for the Palace, he answered, "Only three Crowns,"

Of course, the excellent opportunities which the parks offered were not neglected by those two industrious sections of the community-the duellists and the highwaymen. Almost every square yard of Hyde Park could tell some tale of bloodshed and lives risked for a hasty word or a fancied slight. As there is a certain monotony about these affairs of honour, we may take the famous meeting between the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Mohun as an illustration of them all. Although the affair resulted from a dispute over a law-suit, it assumed a political importance, as the Duke was a leader of the Jacobite party, and his opponent favoured the Whigs. They met one November morning, in the year 1712, at the Ring, Colonel Hamilton acting for his namesake, and the fiery General Macartney for Lord Mohun. So fierce was the feeling on both sides, that, while the principals were engaged, the seconds started a contest on their own account. There are conflicting reports as to the details of the tragedy, but Colonel Hamilton's version has been accepted as nearest the truth. He stated on oath, that, having disarmed Macartney, he turned to note the other pair. He saw Mohun fall, with the Duke over him, and immediately ran to their assistance. While he was lifting his kinsman, he saw Macartney come up, and deliberately stab the Duke over his shoulder; the General then left the field. Both the noblemen died of their wounds on the spot, and Macartney fled across the Channel, with a heavy price upon his head. Great capital was made out of the event by the Tory party, yet such was the weight of influence in those days, that when Macartney returned to stand his trial, he was not only acquitted of the more serious charge of murder, but was reinstated in the army, and presented with a regiment.

The gentleman of the road was long the terror of the highway between Kensington and Knightsbridge. As late as the year 1700 a detachment of light horse was employed to patrol nightly from Hyde Park Corner to the former place. Foot passengers waited until a party could be made up sufficiently strong for mutual protection, a bell being rung when a start was deemed prudent. An extract from Lady Cowper's diary, in 1715, speaks volumes:--"I was at Kensington, where I intended to stay, as long as the camp was in Hyde Park, the roads being so secure by it, that one might come from London at any time in the night without danger, which I did very often." The romance which such writers as Ainsworth have given to the highwayman is not so highly coloured as may be supposed. During his brief term of office he was a man of note, the darling of the fair sex, the hero of play and ditty. He danced at Ranelagh and diced at the clubs with impunity; and when, at last, he became notorious enough to be worth apprehension, he passed in triumphal procession from Newgate to Tyburn, dressed in the newest fashion, bowing gracefully to the windows, where ladies of position shed real tears of grief, and gaily quaffing a farewell cup with admiring friends of his own sex. The courtly McLean-grocer and gallant-made Hyde Park his chief scene of action. Here, on a November night in 1749, he nearly put an end to Horace Walpole himself. That gentleman's coach was stopped by McLean and his accomplice, Plunket, as he was returning from Holland House. A pistol, accidentally going off, grazed the skin under his eye, and stunned him. "The ball went through the top of the chariot, and if I had sat an inch nearer to the left side, must have gone through my head." But he freely forgave the fascinating scoundrel, when the law at last intervened. He writes: - "My friend McLean is still the fashion.



bers of White's came in a body. Lady Caroline Petersham and other ladies of title wept over him, and uttered broken words of comfort. "Some of the brightest eyes were at this time in tears."

Of no less interest are the associations connected with St. James's Park: its trim lawns and alleys were familiar with such figures as Cromwell, Milton, and Nol Goldsmith; Charles I. had to cross it on his way from St. James's Palace to the scaffold at Whitehall; it became a huge bivouac for the troops of the mad Lord Gordon, when the mob kept poor King George out of his bed for several nights, and Buckingham House was prepared for a siege. Originally "a low swampy meadow belonging to the Hospital for Lepers," on the south of Hyde Park, it was converted by the Tudor Bluebeard into "our Palace of St. James,"

By his command the meadow was drained and included, as we have seen, in his "chase," but in the succeeding reigns it was robbed of its timber, and, like the rest, "disafforested." This park was a favourite haunt of Charles II., who took a peculiar delight in adorning it with all the latest horticultural improvements. He employed the genius of Le Notre to lay it out in the trim Dutch style, then prevalent. The Birdcage Walk obtained its sobriquet from the double line of cages on either side of the long walk at the East Boundary, in which the Merry Monarch kept his celebrated collection of feathered pets. The severe angularity of its first design was modified in the present century, when the grounds assumed their existing kite-like shape, the rigid parallels of the canal being metamorphosed into the pleasant sheet of water that it now exhibits.



those of the grounds attached to some great country-seat. Its wooded uplands and sloping meadows, comprising over four hundred acres, were originally part of that extensive tract, Marylebone Park Fields. It was much used for the chase by the court of Elizabeth; there is an account given of the Russian Embassy passing through the City in the year 1600 to hunt here. It was also in request for tilting-matches, as instance that wherein Sir Charles Blount wounded the Earl of Essex. Under the Commonwealth it was disposed of to find maintenance for a dragoon regiment, the grand old timber being removed and the herds of deer disappearing never to be replaced. Reference has already been made to the Marylebone Gardens which lay to the side of the High Street; they were a later development of the Old

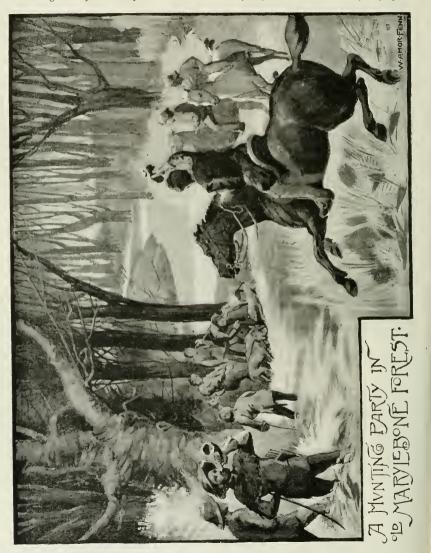
Rose Tavern and its bowling-green. That it kept

sequently money may

urther than Newman Street and the Middlesex Hospital. Beyond was open country as far as Hampstead and Harrow. At the middle of the last century the dangers increased so that the proprietors employed a military guard to escort visitors to and from the gardens, and a reward of ten guineas was offered for the capture of any highwaymen along the road. It was in Marylebone Gardens that the great Dick Turpin saluted fair Mrs. Fountain, saying at the same time, "Be not alarmed, madam; you can now boast of having been kissed by Turpin,"

The lease of the last owner, the Duke of Portland, having expired, the present park was commenced in 1812, under the supervision of Nash, of Regent Street renown. The first intention was to erect a stately palace for the Prince Regent in the centre of the Inner Circle, the rest of the out as the Royal Botanical Gardens. It was not grounds being an adjunct. Why this idea was

till the year previous to this that the park proper was



completed, and thrown open in all its perfecabandoned has never been clearly shown, but relinquished it was, and in 1839 the site was laid tions.

A RUSTIC FLIRTATION:

A PASTORAL SKETCH.

By George Morley.

'I CANNA get a blench on the bonnie laddie's eye now, hardly—hardly a blench. 'Tis the way with'em all when a dand faggot like Loo comes brevetting about under their noses. Bless her though, bless her! I canna 'elp saying it. She's a sweet bit of hussy, an' the daughter of my old schulemate, Ju. The reckling o' the bunch, too, an' the prettiest as Ju ever had. I munna be too hard on the laddie, I s'pose. Mothers mun go a-one side when dand maids come tooting about arter their sons. Eh! but my life's as holler as a deaf-nut without that laddie's love. Hey, ho! So 'tis. Just as holler as a deaf-nut from Cuddington Wood."

The speaker made lengthy pauses between the delivery of the sentences. She was obviously somewhat perturbed. The sound of the words alone conveyed the impression that the person who uttered them was experiencing a sharp and secret bitterness.

Mrs. North, commonly called "Nan North" by the people of Lynton and Cuddington, on account of her long residence and agreeable nature, was standing on the top step, the top step of the four that led to her own door, looking eastward—towards the neighbouring village of Cuddington.

Her cottage was the last one of a little cluster, or chain, of rural dwellings in the east end of Lynton. All the cottages were highly reminiscent of by-gone generations. They told of the past—perhaps of the happy past. Of the days when Lynton was perfectly isolated from civilisation; when Brookington itself was a mean village; when the nearest point to the outer world was the anciently walled town of Arwick.

Four out of the five cottages bore the imprint of the modern hand. They were tiled with red tiles. This gave them a quaint appearance, for the little bulging windows, about two feet square, still remained, and the four shale steps still led to the doors.

Nan North's cottage had the dignity of its age. Like Nan upon the doorstep, it declined to profess a juvenility which it did not feel. It was the one house of the chain which continued to wear the comfortable and homely thatch with which the builder had roofed it when it became a human habitation.

Its east end came down with a long grotesque slope right to the top of the garden-gate, on a line with the privet hedge. This gave the tenement an odd appearance. It looked like an uncommonly large thatched gable extending from attic to floor.

The "dab and wattle" front, the bulging doll's-house windows, the ancient shale steps, and the overhanging thatch, under which the swallows built their mud cottages every year, all combined to lend a picturesque antiquity to Nan North's dwelling, which made every visitor to Lynton pause and gaze upon it with admiration. The green houseleek upon the thatched ridge, between the chimneys, gave the rural finish to the cot.

"Hey, 'tis sweetheart afore mother, I observe," said Nan again, looking eastward still. "Well, well, well,"

The neat little woman picked up the corner of her white apron, and wiped something out of the corner of her eye. Then she looked upon her apron. There was a modern bow-windowed house immediately opposite, and she did not want any one there to think she was crying. So she feigned to be looking for a fly that might have flown in her eye.

Then she went in, leaving the door ajar. It was the hay harvest season, the weather was glorious, and Nanny's low-roofed rooms were close and stuffy.

Farther up the lane the little scene which made Nan North shed a tear was in progress. It was an everyday scene to every one but her. To her it was a tragedy, as it is to every mother with a large and sensitive heart.

Upon a plot of green that bordered the pathway in front of four village huts, stood the village pump. When the well was full of water, or had sufficient in it for the needs of the villagers, this was their source of supply. It was full, or had sufficient in it now, for the needs of Lucy Fennimore, who was pumping the water for tea.

She had one hand upon the handle, and with the other was holding the tea-kettle under the spout. She was smiling at, and talking to, a young man in a farm waggon that stood just in front of her—a light waggon for hay-carrying.

This young lass was known as "Loo" by all the people in Lynton; the Cuddington girls called her "Lynton Loo" to distinguish her from the "Loos" of their own.

She was, as Nan North said, "a sweet bit of hussy." There were at least two of the sterner sex in Lynton who added three words on to the end of that, and called her "the sweetest bit of hussy in the world." One of them was laughing at her now from the inside of the farmer's waggon, weracking his whip in the air the while, and looking as though he would like to get out and hug her.

"There! now see what you've done," said Loo, through a peal of merry laughter, as the water from the too-full kettle ran over and splashed her boots and petticoats, and trickled up her arm. "Through looking at your pretty phiz, I've wasted this precious water. And I've wetted my petticoat, too."

"It'll dry, Loo. I'm worth a sprinkle, I hope, lassie?"

"Are you? Well, don't think too much of yourself, Denny, boy," rejoined the girl archly, smiling. "Do you know what they're saying about me now?"

"Nay, lassie, gel, I donner. Nought that's ill-convenient surely?"

"'Tis, though," said Loo, feigning to pout, and looking up to him with a roguish and merry gleam in her eye. "They're saying I'm a gill-flirt, Denny, lad."

"Saying you're a gill-flirt, be they?" said Denny, in a tone of surprise.

"Yes; ever since I went to Brookington and came back to Lynton."

"Let 'em say it, Loo, lass. It wunna hurt thee."

"But I'm not a gill-flirt, Denny; I'm not. You know that, Denny."

"I should think I do, lass. You're nobody's gill-flirt but mine—be ye, Loo?"

The girl smiled now brighter than ever. She tossed her light tresses back from her forehead, and shot a killing glance of sweetness at the young waggoner.

"Now, Den—ney, Den—ney," she cooed. "You're at it again. You're always at that. Just as if you didn't know."

"Well, 'tis so, inna it, Loo?" he pleaded with something akin to earnestness.

"'Tis—'tis—'tis is not, you doubting laddie. I'm nobody's gill-flirt—least of all yours, Denny, boy. Be off with you, you naughty fellow, or else I'll christen ye afresh. As if you didn't know I'm nobody's sweetheart but yours."

Loo edged away from the pump and drew herself, kettle in hand, into the gateway leading to her mother's cottage. She then poured a little water into her hand out of the spout of the kettle, and, with a pealing laugh, threw it over Denny.

"You sweet jade," said Denny, spluttering and shaking the sprinkles out of his eyes. "You pretty gillifer. Come down the Three Acres after tea, Loo?"

"I don't know that I shall," warbled Loo, from between the garden hedge. "You're nearly as bad as the rest of Lynton folk. Besides, Mr. Radford might not like it."

"Oh! Raddy wouldn't mind, Loo. Not a bit, lass. He rather likes you."

"Does he now, Denny, boy?"

Loo reddened. Most girls, with any pretensions to beauty, would have done the same. It is pleasant to gentle females to be told that they are liked. And so the colour mounted up Loo's cheeks. It ran right into her temples, up among her flaxen hair, and made the prettiest of coloured contrasts just there.

But Denny did not notice it. Perhaps he had often seen her colour come and go like that. To him, whatever it was to Loo, it implied nothing but the natural vanity of a girl whose face was her fortune more than any other girl's in Lynton.

"Does he now, does he?" she provoked him.

"Yea, he does, Loo. Now you'll come, lass? It's tedding we be to-night. You can have a rake, and I can talk to thee as we go on."

"How nice," said Loo, roguishly, from the pathway between the white pinks.

"Yea, real nice. It's coming you'll be, inna it, Loo?"

"Is it though?" she said, with a teasing playfulness and a merry little laugh.

"No shuffling! Honour bright! By the carppond in the off corner?"

Loo nodded in that delightfully provoking manner which may imply either "yes" or "no." Denny took it for "yes." He knew her way. He flipped his whip in the air and took a blossom off the plum-tree as his waggon moved on.

"That's three plums less for you, Den."

"You're the only plum I want, lass, bird," he called out jovially over his shoulder. "Come, bird, come, by the green pond where the lords and ladies are."

"I shan't come; I'm going to Brookington. I'm a gill-flirt," she cried out after him, and ran laughing into the cottage.

Den looked back and saw her peeping at him out of the window, over the tatted curtain. Her face was all smiles, and so was his. He could tell then that her Brookington would be "the green pond where the lords and ladies are." So he cracked his whip again, blew her a kiss through his fingers, and rumbled off down the lane.

His mother was at the door when his waggon reached her cottage.

"Whey. Woa, Dolly," he said, pulling up.

"Hast done wi' the lassie at last then, boy?" said Nan North. "I thought ye were for stopping till supper-time, lad. Hey, them dand wenches hold the laddies wi' a silken thread, an' 'em canna get away from 'em."

"Perhaps some on the lads donna want get away, mother," replied Den, laughing and throwing the reins over the horse's back, preparatory to getting down.

"Seems so with thee, Den," answered Nan, mournfully.

"Ah, well, mother, Loo's a bright lass. You like her yerself. I've heard ye say so; an' I—well, I've raggled to be dead in love wi' her somehow or tother."

He got out of the waggon and followed his mother into the house. It was tea-time with them. Den always called for a cup when passing from the Top Closes for the Three Acre.

"The roll man's bin up from Brookington," said Nan, lifting a plate of spreaded rolls from the fender, and placing them on the table before Denny. "They've got crispy now, belike. You've bin so long."

"Five minutes wi' Loo, mother, that's all," said Denny over a saucer of tea.

"Five minutes? Ah!"

"'Twere so; honour bright,"

"Your minutes are long ones, Denny, lad."

"No-ordinary length, as I'm a sinner."

"Well, dinna ye see me at door, waiting for ye to come?"

"Nay, that I didna', mother. If I had I should ave flown to thee like a bird."

"Like a bird as is thirsty, lad?"

"Hey, I was thirsty, too. Its hot, ye know, mother."

Nan paused and went on with her tea. She could see how matters were. Den was thirsty. He would have flown to the house like a bird, not to see her, but for a cup of tea. And to talk with Loo, he would have stayed without his tea till suppertime. How like a young man in love! How like a son whose love for his mother has been weaned from him by a pretty face and a pair of blue eyes!

"We're tedding to-night in Three Acre, mother. Shall come down?"

"Nay, I think not, laddie," said Nan, quietly.
"Thy Sunday trousers are frayed out at bottom a bit, I see. I mun do they for thee."

"Loo's coming down."

"Ah! I dersay. Birds of a feather flock together. I donna think I'll come, my dear laddie. I should only spoil the sport."

Tea was over now; Nan was on the doorstep. Denny was fiddling with the reins, straightening them, and putting them over into the waggon. His mother was attentively watching him. She was wondering whether he was still her boy, or whether Loo had quite completed the conquest over him. Whether, as she much expected, it was sweetheart before mother.

He came and stood on the lowest shale step when he had put the reins into the cart.

"Dolly looks well, mother, donna she?" he said, flipping his whip.

"Yes, you love your horses, laddie; you are like your poor feyther for that."

"I do so. And Dolly's such a brick."

"Yes, she is."

She was looking down his rosy profile, and thinking how healthy he looked, and how much like his father was when he was young. Then she thought another thought, not quite so pleasant to her. It was how good-looking he was, and how likely to attract the eye of a robust girl like Loo. This thought made her heart swell. It grew almost too big for her breast. It was with difficulty that she suppressed a sob that was rising into her throat. She felt a terrible desolation in the thought. She felt that she had lost her boy.

Den moved off the shale step to his waggon, cracking his whip as he went. His mother had been hoping for a "blench on the laddie's eye."

In other words, she had been expecting that he would notice her in his old boy's way. That he would show her a touch of affection, as was his wont ere he had become fascinated with Loo.

She expected in vain. Den placed his foot on the wheel of the waggon, and leaped in, humming a rural ballad—a snatch of it—

"The wild rose inna sweeter,
The violet inna neater
Than pretty little Lucy at the door."

When in the waggon, with reins in one hand and whip in the other, preparing to give the word to Doily, he turned and looked up the lane.

"That flame 'ull burn thee, laddie," said Nan, tentatively.

"It 'as now, mother, I doubt," rejoined Den, smiling and fronting the horse again.

"An' I'm hearing-"

Nan hesitated. She was afraid she was beginning to show too much feeling in the matter. She did not want Den to think that. She would bear her own burden.

"I'm hearing," she went on, forcing a very unwilling smile to spread over her face, "I'm hearing as Loo's a gill flirt."

"Ah! so her's bin telling me. But she's too true for that there, mother."

He gave a smile to his mother, a whistle to his horse, and rumbled further on.

The Three Acre Close was just in the rear of Nan North's ancient cottage. Through the small back windows of her kitchen she could see all over the Close. Her back garden patch behind the house was raised fully five feet from the ground floor. It was supported by an old stone wall, and communicated with the ground by a series of shale steps like those in front of the tenement.

When Shepherd North was alive, Nan used to sit on that raised garden of an evening in a Windsor chair, watching him pen the sheep and bring up the cows.

The farm buildings of Radford's Farm were also partly beneath her eyes. She saw Den take his horse and cart into the barn. She saw him bring out the unharnessed horse and turn her loose in the orchard-like paddock. Then he disappeared.

Some time afterwards she saw him moving over the paddock with a wooden rake upon his shoulder, and the sheep-dog dancing in front of him, mad with delight. He was off to the Three Acre. Through the open door snatches of the song which was haunting him came floating through the trees to her ear:

"The violet inna neater
Than pretty little Lucy at the door!"

"I've lost him, for sure," sighed Nanny, dropping her comely grey head.

Then she fetched his Sunday trousers from upstairs, and sat down by the window to mend them. She loved her lad. She took a pride in seeing him look neat and tidy.

The Three Acre was a picture of delight. In ranks and rumples, lengthwise, all up the Close, lay the mown grass just as the mowing-machine had left it. Out of the rumples or hillocks of grass peeped varied colours—the pink and white of the clover, the yellow of the buttercup and dandelion; the cream of the lady smock; the vermilion of the sorrel bloom; the pied hues of the daisy; the blue of the periwinkle; the white and amber of the moondaisy; the blood-red of the gadding poppy.

It was an unusually early season. The click of the hay-cutter aroused Lynton folk to activity ere they had quite forgotten the merriments of the recent mothering.

Den was at first the only occupant of the Close. Presently, however, Nan North espied the blue feather of a girl's hat, nodding along the hedge top, for the hedge was cut low. The next moment she saw Loo scale the hurdles that divided the two meads, and rest temporarily upon the top rail. Then she jumped into the Close, laughing gaily, and galloped over the ridges of mown grass to Denny.

The moment after they kissed each other.

Nan heaved a deeper sigh now. She knew now that she had quite lost her boy. The charms of Loo, the rush of youth, the passion of love, the delight of flirtation had quite conquered him. 'Twas sweetheart before mother true enough. She knew it—oh! so well.

That night the lone widow went to rest with a heart like lead. She dreamed—of her own flirtation by the wayside. It was the common lot. She had loved like Denny loved now; she had left her mother as Denny was leaving her. 'Twas always he way. Always a Loo, always a Den, always a flirtation to make ravages upon a mother's heart.

BIRDS OF SCOTLAND.

By J. H. CRAWFORD.

WE never consider the spring to have begun until the song of the robin ceases to be clearly distinguishable. A bright gleam earlier in the year may start some other singers prematurely, but the blizzard comes on the back of it and silences every sound, except the clear notes of the redbreast



VELLOW-HAMMER.

Our first songster is the missel-thrush. Some fine day, about the beginning of February, or even toward the end of January, he makes himself heard, usually from the very top of a tree; in this quarter he seems to prefer the spruce fir. His song, though somewhat wanting in softness, sweetness, and variety, is still sufficiently thrush-like to be pleasant, and, coming thus early in the year, is all the more welcome.

A fortnight after, the song-thrush, or mavis, breaks forth. He begins to sing very soon in the morning. One wakes to find his bedroom still dark, but filled with music from the tree opposite, or from the distant wood copse. He sits above the middle of the tree, or on a bush, and thes together with his smaller size, his sweeter song, and his darker appearance, mark him off from his cousin of the mistletoe.

Still later, but not very much, the blackbird adds its rich contralto. He is the most careless of birds-careless, among other things, in his song. He delivers two or three notes at a time, for all the world as if he were too lazy to connect the different parts together. He sings far on into the deepening twilight. We associate him with the summer evening, as we associate the mavis with the spring morning.

Within the first ten days of March, the chaffinch begins to wake up-not all at once, but with a kind of twittering at first. The male, with his blue cap, his russet breast, and the white in his wing, is the most beautiful of our native birds. And he has the commonest of songs, an endless and wearisome repetition of what we used to render



into Scotch, "Wee, wee, wee, wee, drookit little sowie."

In the same tree with the chaffinch, the greenfinch utters his few melodious notes, which seemed only a promise of what he might do if he tried. His long-drawn-out call is one of the most familiar of woodland sounds.

Late to begin, and last to end of our resident birds, is the jeit, or yellow-hammer, who sits on the paling through the whole hot summer day and sings to his patient mate in the ditch or field side that simplest of songs, "A very little bread and

no-o cheeeese." In the picture he is on a dried twig among the uncurling ferns. There is no yellow like that of his head when freshly put on in the spring. He is really one of our bright birds.

The very earliest of our visitors is the chiff-chaff, coming with the daffodils. which fill the woods of March with beauty. His name has been given him from his song, which sounds somewhat like those two words. He is thus a warbler only by courtesy, as he can scarcely be said to warble. He

is usually spoken of as a somewhat rare bird in Scotland. If I trusted to the number of times I had seen or even heard him, I should have been disposed to agree with that. But his nest is by no means rare, as I have come upon it frequently, and I find the eggs in distressing abundance on that sure guide to the naturalist—the schoolboy's string.

By far the most numerous of these summer visitors is the willow-warbler. He makes his appearance about the end of April, and, after that, is heard everywhere. His song, if not more varied, is more musical than the chaffinch's, and he shares with that bird the honour of making June a lively month. He is of small size, like most of the warblers; builds a domed nest on the ground, generally at

the root of some bush or scrub, or tall overarching plant. There he deposits a number of tiny eggs covered with faint red dots, which eventually result in such an interesting little family as we have here represented.

On every rough piece of ground or railway embankment, the whinchat keeps up an incessant sharp noise, so long as the human intruder is near. He gets his name from the habit of chatting, and from the scene he frequents. On every hill, or moor, or grassy sea-



WILLOW-WARBLER,

coast, the place of the whin-chat is filled by his cousin, the wheat-ear. He is easy to distinguish from the other by the white appearance as he flies away, because of which he gets his common name of white tail.

Among our more familiar visitors are the sedgewarbler and the white-throat. The sedge-warbler,

by scraping

among the dead

leaves about the

roots of the haw-

thorn, manages

to pick up a

living among the

chrysalids. But why the robin

stays, except that

he is a particu-

larly resourceful

bird, gets so bold

in winter that he

comes to the

windows, and

will take almost

anything at a

pinch, I find it

insect food. They seem to

be on the bor-

der line be-

tween migrants

and non-mi-

grants. I find that a certain

the stream-side.

And I think it

probable that

many of the

rest don't go

which is found in every likely place, by ponds, lakes, streams, and marshes, is our Scotch nightingale, and helps to make up to us for the absence of the latter

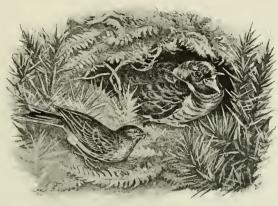
Indeed, so retiring are these warblers, and so

much alike are they, that only a very good

observer can tell how many species may or may

not be in the neighbourhood. Except to illustrate

The whitethroat is easily known by a jerky flight over the top of hedge or bush, in the course of which he delivers himself of his song. In every quiet place his harsh, scolding note attracts attention to the broom or bramble bush, where he sees, but remains unseen.



YOUNG CUCKOO IN MEADOW PIPET'S NEST.

hard to make out. Between the warblers and the hard-billed birds come one or two forms worth mentioning. The wagtails, of which we have the pied and the grey here, are soft-billed, and need

Though soft-billed birds, the hedge-warbler and

the robin remain with us all the year round. The

former leads a humble life in the hedge-rows, and,

as half a dozen. These visitors being softbilled and unable to manage seed like the hard-billed birds, feed mainly on caterpillars and insects in the perfect or imagostage. With the approach of cold weather. their chief supply fails, and

they have to

their different

habits, one pic-

ture is as good

LANDRAIL OR CORNCRAKE.

seek it in warmer climes. This is the reason why they leave us and come back again in the spring.

There are two interesting exceptions to this.

number-not many-remain in the neighbourhood all winter, and seem to be able to find what they want by

very far away, seeing that the bird-catchers frequently get them in the hardest weather.

The thrushes come very near to the warblers;

but these are never at a loss. Some of them can make a meal out of any piece of turf on a fresh winter day. They may be seen, their heads cocked to one side as if listening, and every now and then making a sudden dab at the adventurous worm. The mavis can always get a snail above the old fences to crack on his favourite stone, and the blackbird a chrysalis among the beach leaves in the dry ditch. And, when everything else fails, they can subsist on the berries which are sufficiently plentiful. Whether these really

migrate or not I cannot say. Missel-thrush, songthrush, and blackbird are always here; but whether these are the same, or whether our summer birds move south on the approach of winter, and others from the north take their place, has not yet been

quite settled.

The whole question of migration is still an open one, and calls for a whole host of observers, young folk among the rest. The extreme view is that there is a general movement all over the field, and even the hardbilled birds, which could get plenty of food, keep moving backward and forward on the approach of warm and cold weather.

The only exception allowed are the game

birds. Well, rooks are not game birds. And it is very unlikely that the sparrow leaves the neighbourhood of the familiar house top. It is a well-known habit of the starling to visit his nesting quarters in the winter months, showing that he hasn't been far away. The tits, which sleepily twitter in the fir trees through the short December afternoon, are probably the same tits which see-sawed there on the long days of summer. The same hedgewarblers scrape around the root of the hawthorn in which they lay their blue eggs. The same robin, whose nest we found under the deep shelter of the undergrowth, sings on the fading ash-tree over the way, and begs at the window when the snow comes. Until some such device as ticketing the birds is resorted to, we shall be hard to convince that the change of place, if it occur at all, is other than very partial.

The double note of the cuckoo is heard here for the first time about the beginning of May. It probably has a very short time to stay, and for

that, among other reasons, drops its eggs into the nests of other birds. The egg is small for the size of the bird, the better to deceive the comparatively minute species it wishes to impose upon, and mimics in colour and marking those around which it is placed. In arranging a large collection the other day, I had some difficulty with two which resembled certain eggs, but were sensibly bigger. It was only because of this difference in size that I was able to assign them to the cuckoo. It seems to prefer the meadow pipit as a foster mother for its offspring, and generally betakes itself to the neighbourhood of moors and hill sides, where that bird lives and nests. In the



TWIFE, OR MOUNTAIN LINNET,

illustration, taken from an actual example, the young giant has turned out the legitimate occupants, and is finding the old bird more than enough to do.

A week later the grating crex crex of the corncrake, the wonderful ventriloquist, that seems to be here, there, and everywhere, is heard from the grass field.

The warblers thin out and depart by degrees, and some day late in September, or early in October, we miss the swallows from the mill ponds.

Meantime our winter migrants are making their appearance. Chief of these are the field-fare and



HOODED CROW.

the red-wing. When these two visitors arrive from their summer quarters in Norway, or elsewhere, we have an interesting collection of the thrush kind. There are no less than seven. The field-fare, the red-wing, the missel-thrush, the song-thrush, and the blackbird make five. The water-ouzel, with his black body and white breast, is a thrush that has been thrust out on the one side to find food for itself in the streams. The ring-ouzel, represented in the picture, with his black body and white collar, is another thrush which has been thrust out to provide for itself on the mountains and moors.

Among smaller birds, the siskin and redpole abound, and are both known to breed in Aberdeenshire. The snow-bunting appears in great numbers, and in severe winters the brambling, or mountain finch, is seen flocking with the chaffinches.

A great many changes are taking place in our bird-life, some of them so very rapidly that anyone with his eyes open can watch their progress from season to season.

Some species seem to be on the increase, some on the decline, and the causes of increase and decrease form a very curious and interesting study. In some cases, at least, the explanation lies very much upon the surface.

The gamekeeper, in ignorant zeal for what he conceives to be his duty, is responsible for the destruction of a great number of interesting forms. I give illustrations of those he ought to leave alone, and these we are prepared to hand over to his tender mercies. "The hooded crow is the only bird against whom I wage constantly detected them destroying my most favourite birds and their eggs that I have no pity on them." The bird-catcher is responsible for the almost complete extinction of the goldfinch, and the thinning out of the common linnet.

Another agency tending to disturb the balance is at work all over the field.

The starling is multiplying at an alarming rate. Much as we may regret to wage war on this brilliantly-hued and intensely lively fellow, we may



RING OUZEL.

be driven to it by-and-by if we don't wish to be all starling together. Summer by summer, pairs are taking possession of new coigns of vantage, and winter by winter the flocks are increasing in number and size. Now, the starling builds in unused chimneys, old and lofty buildings, and deep holes in trees and elsewhere, just precisely the places which are most difficult of access. There each pair manages, in comparative security from bird-nesting boys, to raise two broods of five each, every one of which probably takes wing.

In like manner the house sparrow, which must also keep within bounds if it wishes to be left alone, builds under the caves and beyond the reach of the younger members of the household.

It is evident that the missel-thrush is immensely on the increase, whereas the song-thrush is probably stationary, the blackbird decreasing. Mr. Darwin remarks that species of the same kind, being very much alike in their structure, and their wants, and thus seeking after very much the same things, are likely to come to close quarters, and the weakest is sure to go to the wall. As an illustration of this, he mentions the increase of the misselthrush, and the decrease of the song-thrush in Scotland.

This is very true, but the mischief seems to me to begin a little further back. A glance at that sensitive barometer, a country boy's collection, will show that for every missel-thrush's egg there are twenty song-thrushes, and that, notwithstanding the fact that the former is the more common bird. The only reason is that the blue eggs with the black spots are easiest to get. The missel-thrush builds on a tree, and usually selects one bare of branches for a long way up. The last nest I saw was on the lowest fork, some thirty feet from the ground, with a nasty bend, almost impossible to pass, on the bare trunk. An authority says that in England the bird builds in the gardens in the most careless fashion imaginable; but, as far as my experience goes, that is not their habit here. The song-thrush, on the other hand, is contented with a whin or broom-bush, a low fern, or even the ground. Opposite my window there is a strip of young fir-trees, none of them above six feet high. Were I to spend a quarter of an hour there on a spring day, I could fill a basket with eggs, and I know that it is raked several times every season. The wonder is not that there are so few mavis, but rather that there are any at all. The

chaffinch, a very abundant species, generally builds high in the firs. Some kinds of tit—the coal-tit for instance—are extremely numerous, and the reason is that they place their nests in holes of trees—very difficult to find, and very difficult to reach when found.

It would thus seem that the species of birds which are increasing usually build in scarce places, whereas those which are either standing still or decreasing, like the hedge-warbler or the blackbird, place their nests within the reach of all.

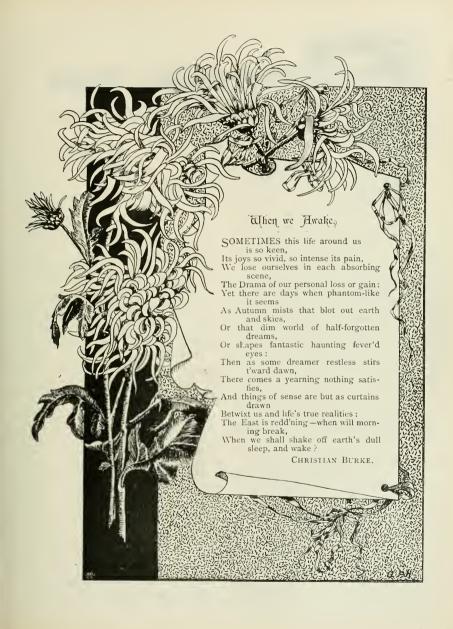
Ground builders (especially by hillside, moor, or open field) are comparatively safe, as the space is so great that the searcher is likely to miss them. Whereas the common linnet, a whin or bushbuilder, in addition to the bird-catcher, suffers at the hands of the bird-nester; the twete hatches among the long grass or heather in safety. This is how we account for the increase of the much-persecuted lap-wing.

The only sufferer seems to be the lark, and this may be partly accounted for by the reclaiming of many of the waste-places on which it used to build. Perhaps the outcry is greater than the facts warrant. Happily every field here has still its pair, and nothing can exterminate them from the wide belt of links around parts of our coast.

The protective colouring of eggs is often very wonderful. Especially is this the case with those openly exposed. As on the sea-coast where we get a ground colour of sand, spotted over with spots of gravel, in exact imitation of the surroundings.

The same safeguard protects the sitting bird, which is always coloured soberly and harmoniously. Four times in one day, crossing a moor, did I almost tramp on the Eider duck, so closely did her plunage blend with the heather, and in all cases she sat perfectly still, as if aware that the safety of the eggs depended on her escaping detection.

By these services Nature clearly points out that there is, at least, as much danger from enemies, including the schoolboy, as from competition. And the danger is increasing so rapidly as to suggest that something must be done, and that soon, if spring is not speedily to lose its chief charm, for want of some of our sweetest singers.





CHAPTER XXIII.

WORSE THAN DEATH.

BETSY HERON was down on her knees, vigorously scouring the sanded floor of her kitchen,—an operation which was regularly performed every Saturday night, after all other duties of a culinary nature had been satisfactorily discharged. She had tucked up her dress and twisted it into a most ungraceful knot behind, so as to ensure entire freedom of action; and so energetically was she plying the sandstone, that she did not hear a knock at the kitchen door until it had been several times repeated.

"Wha's that?" she inquired, in anything but reassuring tones, rising from her knees, and reluctantly undoing the aforesaid knot, as she proceeded to open the door.

"Gang awa'; I hae naething for ye," she began; but a familiar voice accosted her with:

"Losh, do ye no ken me, Betsy wumman? I've been chapin' a dizen times; ye maun be growin' as deef's mysel"."

"Oh, it's you, Peggy!" exclaimed Betsy, in a more amiable voice. "I didna ken ye. Come awa' ben. I was jist scoorin' the flair, an' the stane keepit me frae hearin' ye. But what brocht ye ower at this time o' nicht? I thocht Mr. Dunbaur wad hae been awa' to his bed."

"Him awa' to his bed!" retorted Peggy. "He'll no' be in his bed for ither three oors yet. If it wasna for me, gude kens when he wad think o't, wi' a' thae books an' papers aboot him. I ken ower weel what I'm aboot."

Here she paused, and, directing a mysterious glance at the door leading into the lobby of the house, said in a cautious whisper:

"I say, wha's ben there?"

"Wha sude be ben but them the hoose belangs to, ye auld gowk," was Betsy's uncomplimentary rejoinder, as she scanned the face of her visitor with increasing interest at the same time.

"Weel, jist put to the door, will ye, for I hae something to tell ye I dinna want them to hear," continued Peggy, seating herself on one of the newly scoured chairs by the fire, and maintaining an air of inscrutable mystery.

With no good grace, Betsy complied, her wonder overcoming her resentment at being ordered about in her own domain; then, planting herself in front of her visitor, she stood waiting, with arms akimbo, for the momentous communication which she had little doubt concerned the inmates of Cliff Cottage.

After a preliminary pause, meant to impart greater dignity to her message, Peggy proceeded to deliver it, as follows:—

"I was awa' at Lynnburgh the day, to get some odds and ends for the maister, an' I gaed to speer for my gude-sister an' her weans. They leeve at the end o' the toon, no' vera faur frae the inn. An' what do you think they telt me? Ye'll no' be ony mair dumfoondered than I was mysel' when I h'ard it. They say it's a' by wi' young Maister

Errol an' the play-actress. They were seen gaun awa' frae the theaitre last Thursday nicht, an' she cam' hame alane. The next nicht a' the folk that gaed to the play got back their siller, for she had fa'n ill, they were telt, an' couldna' perform; and noo the theaitre's shut up, and they're a' awa', gude be thankit! But I couldna bide withoot lettin' ye ken o't, for I was suir ye wad be braw and thankfu' to hear that yer young maister wasna gaun to be inveigled by a pented Jezebel after a'."

She paused to take breath, and looked triumphantly at Betsy, expecting to see her transported with delight. But grievous was her disappointment to find that her auditor had become graver than ever, and betrayed no sense of relief whatever.

"Losh! ane wad think I had telt ye they were mairried," she remarked, in a reproving voice. "I'm suir I needna hae put mysel' to the trouble o' comin' ane end's eerrand to tell ye what I thocht wad be gude news, gin I had kent ye wad look sae glum on the heid o't."

"Quat yer havers, Peggy," retorted Betsy.
"Did ye expect I wad mak' a gomeril o' mysel' jist to please you? Ye micht ken I'm mair ta'en up wi' onything that concerns my ain folk than you're like to be; but I canna say ae thing an' think anither; an' my he'rt misgi'es me this is no the end o't."

"I dinna ken what ye mean," said Peggy, more and more perplexed. "Ye suirly dinna think he'll---"

"It's nae business o' yours what I think," sharply interrupted Betsy, diving down into her pail, and resuming the scrubbing operations. "Folk shouldna fash their heids wi' ither folks' affairs."

"My certy, ye're no blate to fling that in my face, Betsy Heron. I'm suir I dinna fash mysel' as muckle wi' ither folks' affairs as ye dae yersel'; an' ye needna flee up like a teeger because I put a ceevil question anent a thing a' the folk in the toon are talkin' aboot."

"An' I wish I had a rotten egg to stap in ilka claverin' mooth," was the indignant retort. "Wha are they to be talkin' o' my young maister, I wad like to ken? If he hasna been his ain best freend, it's himsel' that'll suffer; I wad hae gi'en ye credit for mair sense, Peggy Murdoch, than to listen to ony sic talk."

"Weel, weel, ye needna wreak oot yer anger on me, as though I was payin' ony attention to what they say; an' I'm suir I dinna want to ken onything ye dinna want to tell; only, it's but nat'ral I sude hae an interest in the brither o' her that's to be the wife o' my ain young maister some day."

"Nae offence, Peggy: I'm like yersel', a wee quick wi' my tongue; but it gars me maist sweer to hear ony reflections on my ain folk. Ye needna hurry awa'."

"Ay, I maun be hame for Mr. Dunbaur's supper; but ye'll maybe look ower an' tell us if onything mair happens."

"I canna say, Peggy. But be suir ye gie the lee to a' thae stories."

"Ay, ay, but I'll keep my lugs open tae; it whiles answers to gie the de'il a lick wi' his ain weapons, ye ken," said Peggy, as she drew her plaid over her head, and took her way to the manse.

Betsy resumed her scrubbing; but several times she found herself pausing with the dripping cloths in her hand, as she recalled the words she had just heard regarding the departure from Lynnburgh of the woman who had wrought such havoc in that home. She began to wonder if Miss Errol had heard this news, and resolved to ascertain without delay. Accordingly, when, half-an-hour afterwards, Mary came into the kitchen, to ask for something, she related what Peggy had told her.

Mary was in possession of the news already, however, and seemed to shrink from any approach to the painful subject. Ronald had announced it to her the night before, and thus supplied a clue to the mysterious alteration in Kenneth which was causing them untold dismay. Only a week ago he had appeared uplifted above care or grief of any kind; then all at once they saw him transformed into a very image of despair. His grief, whatever its cause, defied concealment: already it was plainly legible in his haggard face and languid eyes.

But this was not all: a deeper, more alarming change was making itself felt, the mere suspicion of which had driven sleep from poor Mary's pillow, and haunted her by day with an ever-increasing dread. She dared not breathe it even to Ronald, whose fixed displeasure against his brother

made it impossible to confide in him. As for Mrs. Errol, it was her constant prayer that that loving mother, already bowed down with grief on account of the disgrace of this her favourite son, might never share in her unspoken fear; indeed, to guard against such a possibility had been her ceaseless care during the past few days. But now all her watchfulness seemed likely to prove unavailing in the face of Kenneth's growing recklessness: very soon, unless some counteracting influence intervened to prevent it, disclosure must ensue; and then—oh, surely that mother's heart would break.

The months of total estrangement between themselves and Kenneth had made it worse than difficult to approach him; while the very nature of her suspicion was such as to render the thought of remonstrance well-nigh unendurable. Yet, if her fear was well-founded, where was the consideration strong enough to deter her from the effort to save him? And that it was well-founded, every successive hour more thoroughly convinced her. Oh! for strength and wisdom to discharge a duty demanding so much of both!

Kenneth, however, allowed no one any opportunity of speaking to him. Ever since that momentous change which had struck dismay to all their hearts, they scarcely saw him; and, when they did. his demeanour was such as to deter them from any attempts to break down the strong, though invisible barrier, which his past conduct had put between them. There was a fierceness, a wild recklessness about him more appalling than any symptoms he had hitherto exhibited throughout his career of infatuation and folly. Even Mrs. Errol seemed almost afraid of him, and mourned bitterly over the disastrous change, though she could by no means account for it, except on the supposition that he had been made the victim of the actress's duplicity; a belief in which both Mary and Ronald shared.

Thus another week had gone past without bringing any opportunity of remonstrance, and Mary's alarm was increasing every day, when, unexpectedly, a means of approaching that erring brother presented itself in the shape of a letter from Jessy Douglas, which ran as follows:—

"San Remo, June 18th, 18-.
"Dearest Mary,-My tears are falling so fast

that I can hardly see to write. Our hopes are all blasted, and it seems—yes, Mary, even I cannot shut my eyes to it any longer—that our darling Ada is going to leave us.

"At first we thought she would rally; and she certainly looked much more like her old self for a time; but now it is too plain that nothing can really restore her. I think she has known this all along, for when we used to talk of what we would do after she was well, there was something in her quiet smile that seemed to say she had little hope of ever being well; although she never said so, but rather tried to appear hopeful like ourselves. And her decline has been so gradual that we hardly noticed it. But if you were to see her now, I am sure you would be startled by the woful change in her appearance. Oh! it is terrible to watch her growing thinner and thinner every day; it is just like seeing a flower fade. And she was so sweet and lovely! Willingly would I give my life if that could save her; but death will take no ransom, and he has laid his ruthless hand upon our dearest.

"She wishes to come home: day and night this has been her constant cry; and I did not lose hope until I saw that the doctor, instead of opposing it, at once gave his consent. He evidently thinks nothing can make much difference now, and wishes to gratify this natural desire to come home before—I cannot write the words, they seem so cruel. But this is indeed the case; and I wished to tell you beforehand so that you might have time to prepare yourself for the meeting.

"We have written for Aunt Joan, at Ada's request, and expect her very soon. She is such a good nurse that her assistance will be of great value to poor mamma, who is worn out already, especially with the prospect of this tedious journey; for the doctors say any over-fatigue might prove fatal to our precious invalid, and so we shall have to travel by slow stages. But we expect to reach home in about three weeks.

"Ada wishes me to say she will expect to see you immediately after her arrival. But when I think of the long journey lying before us, I almost tremble lest she should never reach the end of it.

"You will hardly be able to read this blotted scrawl, I fear; but in truth I am in such a state of mind at present that I cannot fix my thoughts for two consecutive minutes on anything, and my writing is never good at any time.

"I know this letter will cost you almost as much grief to read as it has cost me to write it, for you were like a sister to Ada; and she dearly loved you, Mary. But I am too sad myself to try to comfort you. Only One can comfort any of us now.

" Pray for me,

"Your loving, but sorrowful

" JESSY."

As if a blow had been dealt her, Mary sat with this letter in her hand, motionless and apparently stunned. Hitherto she had believed, as encouraging accounts had led her to believe, that her friend was recovering from the illness brought on by her great sorrow, and had hoped that time would heal the heart-wounds, which only time can heal. But now that hope was rudely dashed. Could it be possible? The gentle, the lovely and loving Ada Douglas coming home to die?

Ah! if this had been all, she might have borne it; but there was another element in her grief infinitely more bitter than any the deepest affection could have contributed; and as she thought of Kenneth, whose alienation was the real cause of this impending calamity, anguish unspeakable seized and laid her prostrate.

What would he say when he heard this news? Surely, if anything could arrest him and bring him back to a sense of his sin, it must be the knowledge of the awful consequences resulting from it. Here was the opportunity she had been waiting for, and she resolved to take instant advantage of it that night.

Mrs. Errol had gone to bed, though not to rest. Ronald was still reading, but she knew he would soon follow, and she would be left alone to wait for Kenneth's return. How long she might have to wait she could not tell; perhaps till the light of another day had dawned; but, long or short, she must see him without more delay, and so, with work and books to beguile the time—or rather, to prevent sleep—she sat down to her mournful vigil, having first secured the door, lest he should come in unperceived.

Hour after hour went past, and still he did not come. She watched from the window the pale stars fade from the summer sky, as the dawn began to kindle in the east. It was that strangely solemn

hour when night and morning meet, which to weary watchers suggest thoughts of deeper import than perhaps visit the mind at other times; and to Mary Errol it came with an influence mysterious and powerful. Amid all her grief, it seemed to impart a serene sense of trust in that blessedness that would come with Resurrection Day; and, in simple faith, she knelt and prayed for him whose feet had left the paths of peace for the broad, flower-strewn way that leads in the end to destruction.

But, as she knelt, sleep stole insensibly upon her, and she awoke at last at the sound of something, she knew not what. Starting to her feet, she listened with a beating heart until it was again repeated, and she discovered that it came from outside the house-door. Once more she heard it, recognising for the first time the scratching of Cæsar's paws—his usual mode of asking admission.

The dog had accompanied his master when he left the cottage that day; and, at the recollection, a cold chill of undefined dread crept over the sister's heart. Where was Kenneth?

As noiselessly as her trembling fingers would permit, she undid the fastenings, and opened the door.

Cæsar whined with evident distress, and, after jumping up once or twice, as if to enlist her assistance, scampered off down the hill, returning ever and anon to ascertain whether she was still following.

In nameless terror Mary went on, her limbs trembling so violently that she could scarcely walk with any degree of steadiness, until she saw the dog run sniffing round and round a dark object lying prostrate on the green hillside.

A moment she paused, paralysed with fear; then ran wildly on towards the spot on which her gaze was riveted. The dog, as if impatient of delay, came rushing to her side, then darted back again to his post.

With a smothered cry of pain, Mary threw herself down beside that prostrate, motionless form. The sun's first rays fell upon the upturned face, whose ashy hue seemed the ensign of death, illumining the set, rigid features, that looked as if carved in marble. The morning breeze stirred the golden ringlets that clustered around the white, shapely brow. A fair young face! and yet, oh, what sadder sight could a sister's eyes have seen than that same comely face with the blight of

intemperance upon it? Was it possible that it belonged to Kenneth, her peerless, winsome brother, of whom she had been so proud? That limp, helpless form, sunk in a besotted sleep, could it really be the same as that which had ever seemed to carry with it a princely air?

In anguish unspeakable she bent over him, the blinding tears raining down her cheeks and falling on that insensate face like holy lustral drops to cleanse away the guilt. Tenderly she undid the neck-cloth about his throat, and placed her hand upon the throbbing brow. But no answering motion testified to a return of consciousness. Once or twice she repeated his name, in accents that might have penetrated even through the mists of intoxication, but all in vain: the deep stupor still held every faculty captive.

The very dog, in its poor, aimless way, strove to aid her in her efforts to restore his master, running round and round the motionless figure, and sniffing about his face, as if entreating him to awake.

Then Mary saw she must summon Ronald without delay. In a short while the villagers would be astir; and, rather than that they should witness this humiliating spectacle, the risk of deepening his resentment must be incurred.

Noiselessly she stole back to the house, and tapped several times at Ronaid's door. But so sound asleep was he, that not until she had entered the chamber and shaken him by the arm, did he awake.

Contrary to her expectation, he uttered no angry denunciations of that fallen brother; but, when she had briefly told him her errand, he rose without a word, and, in a few minutes, was following her to the spot where Kenneth lay.

He called his name again and again in loud, imperative tones, and raised the prostrate form into a sitting posture; but, although one or two inarticulate syllables broke from the sleeper's lips, no other indication of a revival of consciousness could be elicited.

There was a moment's pause of irresolution before Ronald, with an expression of mingled pity and shame which Mary never forgot, stooped down, and, winding his brawny arms round Kenneth's slight figure, raised him from the grass and carried him into the house.

Pitiable spectacle! What degradation could ever equal it?

The dog ran on before, barking from sheer relief, in spite of Ronald's repeated threats, until the cottage was reached.

Mary followed, weeping bitterly, and dreading every moment to be confronted by her mother.

Her fears were instantly confirmed. Just as Ronald with his burden crossed the threshold, Mrs. Errol, wrapped in some garments snatched up in desperate haste, met him, terror and anguish depicted on every feature.

"Merciful God! is he dead?" was her first wild cry; then, as the truth slowly dawned upon her, she staggered to a chair, and sank upon it with the bitterest cry that had ever been wrung from her lips.

Mary stood helplessly by, unable to speak one word for her own overmastering sorrow.

By this time Betsy had stolen out from the kitchen, where she had been listening to what was going on in breathless excitement; and, shrewdly guessing at the terrible calamity which had fallen upon the family whose honour was dear to her as life, she burst into a violent fit of sobbing, repeating in accents of indescribable pathos, "Wae's me for my bonny bairn!" until Ronald came downstairs, and peremptorily ordered her to go to bed.

Then he turned to his weeping mother, and gently, almost reverentially offered his arm, and supported her tottering steps from the room.

But when they passed the door of Kenneth's chamber, she stopped, and, scarcely hearing Ronald's dissuasive words, entered it, followed by her son and daughter.

Kenneth lay on the bed where Ronald had placed him, still breathing heavily.

Mrs. Errol advanced, bent one long, agonised look on the unconscious face, then sank on her knees beside the couch, convulsive sobs shaking her fame.

"Come, mother," said Ronald, attempting to raise her, for the sight of her grief was more than he could bear.

She heard him not, but when the paroxysm had passed, she rose slowly from her knees, and gazing on the sleeping form of her proud, beautiful boy, said, as if she were speaking to her own heart rather than to them: "Would to God I had seen him in his coffin, or ever I saw him like this!"

How often, in this sin-cursed world, has that

same piteous wail been made over the ruin of lives that once promised fair!

CHAPTER XXIV.

"THE WAY OF TRANSGRESSORS."

MILTON has put into the mouth of the Prince of Darkness these memorable words: "Sun, how I hate thy beams!" thus giving expression to the old principle of inherent antagonism between evil and the light that reveals it. And where is the wrong-doer who has not often endorsed the words?

When, late next day, Kenneth Errol awoke from the lethargic stupor in which he had lain, and beheld the bright sunshine streaming into the room, he involuntarily closed his eyes against its unwelcome radiance, and uttered a groan of distress. Returning consciousness brought with it the full knowledge of his irretrievable disgrace. Memory, though still indistinct, was sufficiently clear to convince him that he had succumbed to intoxication before reaching home on the previous night, and that it must have been his brother who brought him there. Oh! the bitter humiliation of this thought! But worse still, his mother and sister must have been witnesses of his degradation; and, as he by degrees realised all that this involved, he clenched both hands upon his burning brow, and moaned as if under torture.

A motion by his bedside caused him to look up with a wild, frenzied stare; but the next moment his eyes fell with an expression of craven shame, as they encountered the tear-stained face of his sister, who bent over him in sorrow too deep for words.

He shrank from her as if she had been a mortal foe, covering his face from her observation, and throwing his arm across it, like a barrier to keep her away. But she laid her head against the intervening arm, and he felt the warm tears gushing from her eyes upon it. She could not speak; but that one heart-broken cry, "O, Kenneth!" contained a depth of meaning such as more eloquent words could not have conveyed. It penetrated so deep, that in sheer anguish he implored her to leave him. "Go, Mary, go," he cried; "you will drive me mad."

Something in the tone of his voice compelled her to obey, and, trembling in every limb, she went from his presence, her head bowed down with grief.

Then Kenneth sprang from his bed, a wild light burning in his eye, and his lips compressed with the energy of a secret resolve.

A letter lying on the floor attracted his attention, and, thinking it had dropped from his own pocket, he picked it up. It was the letter Mary had received the night before, and which she had let fall as she knelt by the bedside. Some words arrested him, and he read on, the pallor deepening on his haggard face as the truth burst upon him that death was really to be the result of his desertion of the woman who had loved him so well.

"Oh! my God!" he cried, letting his head sink upon his arms, and moaning in pain that seemed every moment to become more unendurable, until at last it drove him from the house, scarcely knowing what he was doing or where he was going.

Mechanically he bent his steps in the direction of the custom-house.

Had he been less absorbed in his own distracted thoughts, he must have noticed the unusually preoccupied air which even the youngest clerk wore that morning. They hardly seemed to observe his entrance, nor did he pay any heed to them until an expression caught his ears which instantly arrested him—" The inspector coming!"

"What?" he demanded, sharply.

"Why, didn't you know His Majesty's Inspector of Customs is going to honour us with a visit to-morrow?" answered a young man, surveying with surprise the startled look of undisguised fear on Kenneth's white face as the dreadful significance to him of this announcement made itself felt all at once. In agony he thought of the money he had appropriated—gone, and none to refund it with. Instinctively he turned to Lesly, whose dark, sinister face was lit at that moment with a smile of such malevolent satisfaction, that, as by a lightning flash, Kenneth seemed in an instant to discover the depths of his vile nature; and the conviction rose full formed within him that this man had detected his theft and subsequently betrayed him.

Maddened beyond all thought of consequences, he followed Lesly when, shortly afterwards, that worthy was leaving the custom-house, and, as soon as they were clear of the village, he confronted him.

"You incarnate fiend!" he cried; "you have betrayed me."

"Betrayed you, Errol?" said Lesly, pretending to treat the matter as a jest, but secretly cowed at sight of the concentrated passion working in every feature of his antagonist's face; "pray explain yourself. So upright a personage as you need fear no betrayal, I should think."

"Answer me one word," demanded Kenneth, white to the lips. "Did you inform against me? Was it you that told them I took the money?"

"Well, then, since we both like candour, I may admit that my duty to His Majesty's Government compelled me to take that disagreeable step," answered Lesly, a gleam of serpent-like enmity kindling in his dark eyes.——"Oh, I'm prepared for you," he added quickly, wrenching a pistol from his breast.

But in an instant Kenneth had snatched it from his grasp, and, springing upon him like an infuriated animal, clutched him by the throat with one hand, while with the other he presented the pistol at his head, ready to discharge its contents into that malevolent brain. In vain Lesly struggled; he was imprisoned in an iron grip, which seemed as if it would never relax until it had effected the vengeance he had himself provoked. In sheer terror for his life, he gasped for mercy, his eyes riveted on the pistol which threatened every moment to put him beyond its reach.

He saw a change come over the face of his antagonist, and presently the pistol was hurled to a distance, as Kenneth released his prey, and, rising to his full height over him, said, with his eyes fixed on the cowering form at his feet, "No, I will not send you to your account sooner than your appointed time. There, go; your punishment is not far off."

Leaving the miserable wretch to recover from his terror as best he might, Kenneth strode away, scarcely knowing what he did. The Furies seemed in pursuit of him, and how to escape he knew not. One thing was certain, he would be apprehended as a felon, perhaps to-morrow, unless he prevented it by flight. There was no one to help him now; and he cared not for his own shame; but, his mother, those who loved him—what of them? No, no, anything rather than stay to witness their shame and anguish. And Ada Douglas, poor Ada Douglas, who had loved him so

well—could he have borne, even apart from this crushing disgrace, to remain to see her die?

Half-maddened by thoughts like these, he rushed on over the desolate heath for miles, until sheer exhaustion compelled him to stop. Then reflection whispered that the time for the execution of his purpose was short; and he turned back again in the direction of home.

But, as he approached the dear familiar spot, his steps faltered, and, unable to conceal his anguish, he entered stealthily and took refuge in his own room. He had caught a glimpse of the little group in the parlour as he passed; and that transient glimpse unmanned him. He dared not encounter the looks of mute reproach in those loved faces, even although he knew they were passing from his sight for ever.

Until the dusk of twilight he sat there alone, battling with the wild torrent of grief that threatened to overwhelm him.

By-and-bye he heard steps ascending the stair. They were his mother's, and Mary's voice was heard addressing her, as she accompanied her to her room.

Oh! how his heart ached to clasp that dear mother in his arms! Must he leave without one farewell word, one token of forgiveness? Yes: she must not know of his purpose. Yet might he not embrace her just once more, tell her he loved her still, and have her blessing ere he went away?

The wish rose into a craving that might not be denied. He paced his room in feverish haste, until he heard Mary pass downstairs. Then he stole out, his heart beating tumultuously, and a great lump rising in his throat.

On the threshold of his mother's room he paused. Could it be that this was their last meeting? Ay, thought more bitter still, was it from his hand that the blow was to fall which would crush that mother's heart as no other calamity had ever done? What would he not have given then to avert that blow from her dear head?

He had scarcely courage to approach the bed on which she lay; and when, hearing his step, she looked up quickly and asked who was there, his voice was too husky to utter a reply. For many weeks he had lived in total estrangement from her and the others of the household, and he knew his appearance before her now would cause her as much surprise as pain. After his degradation of the previous night, she could not behold him without intense distress; and he shrank, as never before, from the sight of her tears.

He sought in vain for some words to express his contrition: they would not come; and, with a cry of unspeakable anguish, he fell on his knees by the bed and buried his face in his hands.

The mother thought his shame for the occurrence of last night had at length brought him to repentance; and in the deep, thankful joy that filled her heart, she wound her arm about the bowed head, and wept over him such tears as angels might weep over a wanderer returned at last.

But every drop that fell seemed to scorch him, as he thought what anguish was yet in store for her through his means. Oh, if he could but have told her all! But his ruin was irretrievable: nothing could avert it now; and with his own her happiness must perish. Still the yearning for forgiveness found expression in words dimly foreshadowing the calamity at hand. "Mother, oh, mother! forgive me," he implored. "God knows I never meant the wrong I have committed; and oh! you do not know how terrible my punishment is."

His mother's sobs interrupted him; but, though she could not speak, he knew that her pardon was already his, and, in grief-checked accents, he uttered those words which were destined to haunt her memory to the close of life:

"Mother, when you hear me spoken of as base and false, remember, oh, remember, my mind was not deprayed; my conscience was never wholly seared; and if I sinned, I am sorry for it now, God only knows how sorry. Oh, mother, promise you will always remember this."

"Kenneth, my bairn, my bairn!" was the tearful answer; "ye hae been a sair heart-break to us a'; but oh! if ye've come to a better mind, we'll sune forget it, and the Lord'll help ye to walk in the way o' His commandments. Oh, seek grace from Him, and ye'll be kept frae fa'in."

She felt his frame quiver under stress of violent emotion, and a deep-drawn sob accompanied his next pathetic words.

"Oh, mother! bless me before I go," he cried, in tones so touching that she became almost alarmed, wondering at their vehemence.

"Surely, my son: when was a mother's blessing

e'er asked in vain?" she replied, caressing the head that lay pillowed on her arm. "Weel ye ken, ye were aye my heart's delight, and ye'll carry my blessing wi' ye a' yer days. May the Lord Himsel' bless ye, Kenneth, my ain dear laddie."

He clasped her to his heart in a long fervent embrace; he murmured her name lovingly over and over again; then gently laid her down upon her pillow, pressed a last kiss on her dear face, and slowly withdrew from the room, knowing that never more would he behold that face in life.

Ontside the door Mary met him, wonder written on her features at this all-unexpected interview, the last words of which she had heard as she came to the door. Her quick eyes detected the secret struggle reflected on her brother's face, and under the impulse of strong sisterly affection, she followed him to his room, and threw her arms round his neck.

Grief overcame all power of resistance, and he laid his head upon her shoulder and wept like a child.

Never before in all the course of their varied experiences had she seen him so moved; and, with that feeling of intense pain which the sight of a strong man's tears invariably excites in woman, she entreated him to tell her what moved him so, and cease weeping. To her, however, there seemed but one explanation of it, and that the occurrence of the night before; and, without waiting for a response, she proceeded to assure him of their forgiveness, enforcing her words by many a loving appeal which made his heart ache.

"God for ever bless you, Mary!" he said at last, as, in tears that sprang more from joy than grief, she was leaving him. "You have been the truest friend that I have known, and I know you'll be so still, though you may hear my name traduced, and all manner of evil said against me. You'll think the best of me in spite of all, won't you, Mary?"

"Everybody will when they see you what you were, Kenneth," answered Mary, her honest face all aglow with the deep, strong love she bore him.
"You will redeem the past."

"Would to God I could!" he moaned; "but oh! my past can never be redeemed."

"Don't say that, Kenneth," she entreated;

"there is hope for all who wish to do it; and we will help you."

"Ay, I know you would, but I must bear the consequences of my sin. But you forgive me for all the misery I have cost you? and you won't think harshly of me when all are speaking ill of me?"

"Why should you ask me that again? A sister's love is a changeless thing: can you doubt mine?"

No; one look into those clear, expressive eyes put doubt to flight: whatever the world might say, she would love him to the last.

She never forgot that hungry, lingering gaze he bent upon her at that moment, nor the mournful smile of yearning tenderness that accompanied it, as, holding her upturned face between his hands, he stooped down and said "Kiss me, Mary."

Lovingly she complied, and the tears from his eyes fell upon her cheek. Ah! how little she dreamt that it was the very last time on earth she would behold that brother's face!

She might have guessed it had she seen him, when the door had closed upon her, as he threw himself down beside the bed and sobbed in uncontrollable grief.

It was now getting late, and the household sounds had ceased. He knew they had all retired for the night save Ronald, who still remained in the parlour below engaged with his usual evening pursuits. Hard words had passed between them; yet he little doubted that Ronald's affection was only held in abeyance through honest disapproval of his past conduct; and the wish to see him once more prompted him to repair to the room where he was.

The lamp on the table at which he was reading revealed the brother's fine manly features, with their earnest painstaking expression, the very reflex of his character. The sternness seemed somehow to have vanished from the face, and Kenneth's grew sad as he noted it. Fain would he have spoken to him; but Ronald, after the first glance, did not look up; and, after hovering about for a few minutes longer, on pretext of searching for a volume in the bookcase, Kenneth reluctantly withdrew, addressing to his dog the farewell that was meant for his brother. "Good-bye, old fellow," said he, "good-bye. I know you don't bear me a grudge, though we quarrelled the other day, eh, Cæsar?"

Did anything significant in the tones strike Ronald that moment, as Kenneth left the room, followed by the dog? If so, he did not allow himself to be disturbed by them at the time. Ere long, however, they were destined to recur to him with the melancholy emphasis attaching to all words—trifling soever though they be—heard for the last time from familiar lips.

And now, alone in his room, Kenneth began his preparations for flight. They were not many, for he could not encumber himself with any but necessaries.

But, ere he closed his small valise, a sudden impulse took him to a shelf on which lay a few books. Two of these he selected: one an album. the other a Bible, his mother's gift years ago. Over the album he bent with lingering tenderness. The likenesses of those dearest to him on earth were there. But one among them seemed to fascinate his gaze: it was that of a queenly woman clad in long, sweeping robes, her raven locks coiled about a classic head, and confined by a golden arrow. The blue veins stood out like whipcord on his brow, as he contemplated that fair image; and a broken cry escaped his lips when at last he closed the album, and placed it with the Bible among the scanty relics of happier days with which he could not part.

There was one thing yet to be done—the hardest task of all. How to soften the blow that must fall on those who loved him so well, was now the question he had to solve. His soul quailed as he pictured them all coming to that room on the morrow to find it empty. He knew only too well how eagerly they would search for any parting assurance that it was not something worse than flight they had to face. With trembling hands, and tears that blotted many a word, he indited his letter of farewell. What it cost him to write it, none save the Searcher of Hearts knew. Ere he sealed it, he bent down, and tried to pray; but words would not come, and his brain seemed on fire.

Deep silence had fallen on the house: the very ticking of the old Dutch clock in the hall below sounded unnaturally loud, and its hoarse voice proclaiming the hour of three made him start. He rose, and peered out of the window.

Dawn was breaking in the eastern sky. In the distance the sea stretched like a dim mist, cold

and still. The village lay asleep below, half-shrouded in a blue haze, which the sun would soon dispel. Already the birds were beginning to twitter in the trees, whose branches swept the window-panes as they were stirred by the morning breeze.

How often, in days gone by, this prospect had greeted him as he rose from happy dreams to a still happier reality, with the glad light of love and hope on his face, and his young heart throbbing with joyous pulses! And now!

He turned from the window, cast one long yearning glance on the familiar objects, each of which had an eloquent voice for him then, and, taking up his valise, passed noiselessly outside.

At the door of his mother's room he paused. She was asleep; he could hear her breathing peacefully: when would she rest so quietly again?

"God comfort you! oh, God comfort you, my mother!" he prayed, as he thought of that bitter awaking on the morrow.

A board in the flooring creaked as he passed Mary's room, and he stopped to listen, lest the sound should have disturbed her; but the regular breathing told him his fears were groundless, and, with a murmured blessing, he passed on, not venturing to halt again at the door of his brother's room.

But there was one inmate of the house whose vigilance he did not succeed in evading. Raising his shaggy form from the mat on which he nightly slept, Cæsar approached his master, and, with a preliminary shake of his rough coat, and a stretching of his long limbs, began to manifest his eagerness to accompany him, as was his wont whenever Kenneth appeared with his hat on his head. The animal fawned upon him, looking up into his face with most speaking eyes; and Kenneth, who had loved the dog with special fondness, put down his portmanteau, and drew the sagacious head between his hands, gazing into its fine face, as though he would fain have spoken his farewell, and told how sad he was to leave his faithful attendant. And the dog, too, seemed to understand that his master was in sorrow, for it began presently to whine, and scanned his face with anxious, excited eyes. But Kenneth checked its demonstrations. and, knowing that the noble animal would obey his commands, however contrary to its liking they might be, he bade it lie down on the mat and be still. Loyal to the last, the dog crouched down where its master pointed, still, however, following his retreating form with those beseeching, sorrowful eyes, whose gaze that master never forgot.

The first rays of the rising sun, falling aslant the dial of the clock, showed him that another half-hour had gone. One moment longer he lingered, listening to the measured vibrations of the pendulum, and the other less regular sounds that, issuing from an adjoining room, showed that poor old Betsy was enjoying the rest she so well merited; then, with a quivering sigh, he bade adieu to that dear home he would see no more, Cæsar's yearning look the last reminder of its wealth of love which might never be his again.

CHAPTER XXV.

A FRUITLESS JOURNEY.

The restless energy of his nature made it impossible for Ronald Errol to remain long in bed after the sun had risen, and in summer especially he was always very early astir—a habit which did not commend itself too favourably to the other members of the household, entailing as it did a proportionately early breakfast. On this morning he had nearly finished his repast before Mary appeared, whom he reprimanded for her tardiness, and then hurried away to catch the early coach for Lynnburgh.

Mary went out to the garden, intending to replenish the flower-glasses, before the others came downstairs; on which task she was engaged when Mrs. Errol came in.

"Has Kenneth not been down yet?" was her first salutation, as she noted the vacant chair at the table.

"No, mother; but he won't be long," said Mary. "Sit down, and let me pour out your tea."

The expression of deep grief had given place to one of calm restfulness on the mother's face. A similar change was noticeable on Mary's; and each understood its cause, though as yet no words had passed between them on the subject. Both were beginning to hope the cloud so long resting on their home-life was soon to pass away.

As she complied with her daughter's request, Mrs. Errol kept her eyes constantly on the door, in ex-

pectation of Kenneth's entrance, and getting at last impatient, she bade Mary run up and tell him breakfast was cooling.

Mary at once rose to do so, but just outside the door she was confronted by Betsy, who was standing there with a scared face, and immediately beckoned her upstairs.

Dreading lest her brother should have been seized with sudden illness, Mary followed the servant, who drew her into her own room, shut the door, and then, half choked with sobs, exclaimed:

"The Lord help us a', Miss Mary, yer brither's gane."

"What?" came with sharp, imperative emphasis from Mary's quivering lips, as she darted a look of almost fierceness at the speaker.

"He's no' in the hoose, Miss Mary," sobbed Betsy. "When I gaed into his room, a wee while since, he wasna there. Come," she added, leading the way, "an' ye'll see he hasna been in his bed a' nicht."

Before the servant could open the door of Kenneth's room, Mary had passed in; but she stood aghast at the confirmation there afforded her of the woman's words: the bed-clothes had not been disturbed. If any doubt had yet remained, it was soon dissipated by the sight of a sealed letter lying on the table, and addressed to Mrs. Errol. Greedily she snatched it up, but at that moment her mother's voice was heard, inquiring what delayed her and Kenneth.

It was a moment of supreme agony for poor Mary, who divined all too surely what that letter contained, and found herself unable to shield her mother from this cruel blow to her newly revived hopes. To deceive her was impossible, equally impossible to prepare her for the awful revelation.

Helplessly she stood, pressing the letter to her breast, until Mrs. Errol's steps were heard ascending the stair. Another moment and she came in, her face blanched with ineffable dread, and her eyes dilating, as she surveyed the empty room, and noted Mary's overwhelming distress.

"Where's Kenneth?" she cried, in accents sharp with pain, gazing alternately from her daughter to the servant.

"Oh, mother!" was all Mary could articulate, as she pointed to the unruffled bed.

"What letter is that?" next demanded the poor distraught mother, catching sight of the one in

Mary's hand, a dim suspicion of the truth beginning to shape itself in her mind. "Give it to me," she commanded, almost angrily. "Why do you stand there without a word, Mary?"

Too much agitated to attempt a reply, Mary watched the trembling fingers undo the seal. But after a futile effort to read the contents, Mrs. Errol gave it to her daughter, saying, "I canna see; read it, Mary." Then with a shuddering sob, she added: "Merciful God! what can it mean?"

As steadily as grief would allow her, poor Mary read those words, with many an interruption caused by her own tears, and those of her two auditors; for Betsy, who ever reckoned herself one of the family, remained to hear the sequel of an event which concerned her almost as much as them.

"Dearest Mother," the letter ran,—"If you knew what I am suffering at this moment, I am sure you would pity me and forgive me for all the misery and shame you must endure on my account.

"I have been a miserable fool, and now I must bear the punishment of my folly. Others will call it by a worse name; but, indeed, I never meant to do wrong, it was only my cursed weakness that led me to abandon my own will to others. Many a time I have thought of the words you once quoted to me from the Bible: 'Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel.' They were more applicable to me than even you supposed. Had I listened to you and Mary, when you warned me against Lesly, this might never have happened; but I despised your warnings, and now he has wrought my ruin. Yes, I am a ruined man. Very soon you will hear me spoken of as a felon; for I took some of the money I had charge of to pay my debts. I meant to pay it all back, but Lesly discovered that I had done it, and betrayed me. Even if the deficit could have been made up, my character was already lost, and only by flight could I escape the disgrace of a public exposal. So I am going away to the New World, if I should succeed in getting a vessel in time, where I may yet retrieve my tarnished name, and atone to you all for the shame I have brought upon you. If I could avert it from you now, I would account my life a small sacrifice. when I think of what I have done, my heart is like to break. Would to God I had died before I fell! Pray for me, dearest mother; you gave me your blessing last night, though you little thought what

sore need made me ask it, and I will carry it with me wherever I go. From this hour I will try to prove worthy of it, and it may be that God in His great mercy will restore us to one another, when I have won back my good name.

"But now I must say farewell; and what it costs me to say it you will never know. May God comfort you and Mary, and so fulfil the one abiding wish of your unworthy, but penitent

"KENNETH."

Mary's voice died away in a quaver of grief as she pronounced the syllables of her brother's name. She hardly dared to raise her eyes to her mother's pale, agonised face.

Mrs. Errol had stood motionless and rigid during the reading of this letter; but, when she had heard it all, she staggered toward the bed, and, falling on her knees beside it, moaned, in piteous accents:

"Kenneth! Oh, my Kenneth! ye've broken my heart."

The good, faithful domestic, unable to endure the sight of her mistress's distress, threw her apron over her head, and, as she herself afterwards related, "gaed awa' doon an' grat."

Mary stood alone, totally unable to speak one word of comfort to her stricken parent. Had it been merely sorrow for Kenneth's departure, she could have whispered words of hope; but the shame—what consolation was available for that?

With her face buried in her hands, she leaned for support against the wall, crushed beneath the ruthless force of despair.

Just then the sound of rapid footsteps on the gravelled path below caused her to start violently, and she looked from the window with a nameless dread of further calamity. But it was her brother Ronald, not an officer of justice, she beheld coming in haste to the house.

A glimpse of his face showed her that he had discovered the truth. It was pale, and bore the impress of stern grief on its every feature.

When he came to the door of Kenneth's room, and beheld his mother sobbing by his bed, a spasm of sharp pain knit his brow and compressed his lips, and he turned away, beckoning Mary to follow him.

Silently she obeyed, and when they were alone he said, in husky tones:

"Mary, it would have been better for him, better for us all, if he had died."

He stopped to clear his throat before he continued:

"When did you discover he was gone?"

"Only just now," sobbed Mary.

"And did he leave no message?"

"Yes, this letter," said Mary, producing it.

Ronald perused it, with signs of deepening gloom on his face. As he returned it he heaved a great sigh, and said:

"Oh! if he had only told me last night."

"Is it too late? Can nothing be done? Oh, Ronald, can nothing be done?" asked poor Mary, looking up in imploring grief into her brother's face.

"No, no; not now," was his mournful answer. "Even by this time rumours of his flight are abroad. It was David Murray, the carrier, who told me Kenneth had gone. He saw him enter the early coach for Edinburgh this morning. Then young Stuart overtook me on the road just now, and asked if it was really true that he had absconded. I told him he had left unexpectedly; and the lad, seeing I knew nothing about it, told me with as much delicacy as possible, that he was suspected of having embezzled some money. He said, if they had known of it sooner, all the clerks would have subscribed to make up the deficit. But that would not have saved the disgrace, since it was known at head-quarters that he took the money. Oh, Mary, what a fool-"

Betsy's entrance interrupted the sentence.

"Mr. Ronald," she announced, "here's Mr. Harry Douglas ower frae the Castle, seekin' ye."

Ronald's face flushed at mention of the name of Douglas. Mary looked amazed, for she had not known Harry was in the neighbourhood, and she instantly concluded that some bad news from abroad had necessitated this sudden visit.

Ronald instantly hastened to meet the visitor, whom he found at the garden gate.

Harry had dismounted, and was holding his brown mare by the reins, idly switching his whip the while, and looking unusually serious. Seeing Ronald approach, he advanced as far as the reins would permit, and said, in his frank, abrupt way:

"You didn't expect to see me, I know; but I want particularly to see Kenneth."

Ronald's grave, embarrassed look called forth one of mingled fear and surprise from Harry, who added hastily:

"Why, has anything happened?"

"The worst has happened," was Ronald's answer, spoken with difficulty. "Did you hear bad news, that you wanted to see him this morning?"

"Yes, I did," assented Harry, hanging his head, and nervously beating his boot with his whip. Then, glancing up suddenly, with one of his ingenuous, affectionate looks, he continued: "But I say, Ronald, it's a trifling sum. And look here, I rode over as soon as I heard of it, and here's the money. Kenneth can repay me at his leisure, and no one need be a bit the wiser. Don't turn away, lad; I know what you're thinking of; but I bear no grudge to Kenneth, and if he'll accept my help, I'll reckon it a kindness. Take this to him yourself, if he doesn't care to meet me."

Every word of this speech seemed to deal a wound on Ronald's heart. Never before had Harry seen him evince such emotion as now. With averted face, and a voice unspeakably sad, he made answer:

"Too late, Harry; too late. Stolen money can be restored, but a ruined name—never."

"But no one beyond the custom-house knows of it yet," pleaded Harry.

"Then before the day is much older every soul in Glenathole will know of it," was Ronald's stern rejoinder. "My brother has fled."

The look of hopefulness faded from Harry's young face; his bright brown eyes opened wide with alarm; and, staggering a step backward, he exclaimed:

"Fled! Good God, where?"

"We don't know," answered Ronald. "We only discovered it a little while ago."

"When can he have gone?"

"Some time during the night, or rather early this morning."

"Then he can't be very far away. Have you any idea where he has gone?"

"Yes; he was seen this morning in the early coach for Edinburgh; but---"

"Why, I may overtake him. I'll set off this very instant." And the impetuous youth sprang to the saddle, eager to start on his benevolent mission.

But Ronald calmly arrested his motion, saying mournfully:

"No use, Harry; the die is cast. Even if we could bring him back in time, the disgrace would remain all the same. No, no; his only safety is in flight. Don't seek to follow him: you would only neutralise his efforts to escape."

Once more the warm light of hope vanished from Harry's comely face, and reluctantly he admitted the force of his companion's argument. Yet it was hard to resign himself to the thought of the irretrievable ruin of one whom he had enthusiastically loved for years; and there was genuine regret in the tones of his next words.

"Can nothing be done?" he asked, gazing upwards to the rooms which he knew were now filled with the sounds of weeping.

Ronald shook his head, and prepared to take leave of his generous friend.

Harry paused and hesitated before he could utter the words: "And your mother and sister—how are they?"

Ronald's expressive look conveyed the answer his lips refused to speak; and, with a sad wave of his hand, Harry rode off.

Ronald could not endure the sight of the grief within his home that day. Upstairs in Kenneth's room Mrs. Errol was still kneeling as before at the bed, weeping convulsively. Mary was beside her, vainly trying to check her tears. Poor old Petsy sat sobbing in the kitchen, her apron thrown over her head, as if she could not bear the light of day. The very dog, assuredly conscious that something was wrong, perhaps remembering the mute farewell he had exchanged with his master the night before, kept gazing up into their faces, going from one to another as though he would be told their sorrow. The whole scene was heartrending, and, finding himself powerless to contribute either comfort or assistance, Ronald went away to the customhouse.

People seemed to direct looks of covert curiosity at him (at least he imagined so) as he passed down the village street; and when he reached his destination, and noted the respectful reserve maintained by the clerks in the custom-house, he could not prevent the blood from mantling on his cheek.

It receded, however, instantly on his perceiving

Lesly's dark, sinister face, studiously averted from

"My business is with you, sir," said Ronald, addressing him in firm, haughty tones, made purposely audible to all ears. "You have been good enough to proclaim my brother's misdeed-a misdeed toward which you have done more to contribute than perhaps is generally known at present. I am here to declare to all who are in any danger of your perfidious influence, as a warning to them, that my brother's ruin lies at your door; that, had it not been for you, his character would have remained to-day as high as once it was. And, be assured, your infamy will come to light ere long, and men will acknowledge that my brother was dishonourable only in so far as he was conaminated by your influence. And now, be good enough to put this cheque for the two hundred and fifty pounds appropriated by him into the money-drawer. All the others here are witnesses that the money is refunded. I wait."

With all those eyes of burning scorn upon him, Lesly found it difficult to retain an attitude of authority.

"I am not sure that such a proceeding is justifiable under existing circumstances," he began, with a seemingly undaunted air.

But Ronald at once interrupted him.

"Then, if you demur, Mr. Goold will assume the responsibility of being custodian of the money."

The man referred to, who had been senior clerk long before Mr. Lesly's advent, promptly obeyed the request, with evident satisfaction, as he noted the dark look bent upon him by his persistent enemy. For, from the first, he had suspected and disliked Lesly, who in turn detested him.

This transaction over, Ronald Errol, with a parting bow to the others, and a steady look of supreme contempt at the author of his brother's ruin, left the custom-house, and took the way to Lynnburgh, dreading to meet some bearer of evil tidings as he went.

Meanwhile, in that deserted room, the stricken mother still refused to be comforted; and Mary, dreading the effects of such violent grief, at last bethought her of an expedient, which, desperate though it appeared even to herself, yet offered at least some chance of mitigating her mother's excessive distress.

"Mother," she said, bending over her, "I'll follow

Kenneth this very hour, if you'll let me. I'm sure I could overtake him, and, even if he can't come back, he'll tell me where he's going, and we'll be able to write to him. Will you let me go?"

Mrs. Errol looked up in sudden, vivid interest, clutching at even this vague hope, and said, with trembling lips:

"Ay, go, Mary; dinna lose a minute. Maybe ye'll find him: he canna be vera far away; and oh! if he wad come back, suirly something could be done to clear him. The laddie ne'er meant to tak' the siller, and we could pay it a' back again. Oh! onything rather than that he sude gang awa like this. But," she added, in altered tones, "how will ye ken where to seek for him?"

"He must have stopped at the 'Thistle Inn' in Edinburgh; I'll inquire for him there," replied Mary, struggling againsther own misgivings. "The coaches all put up there. I feel that I must see him, and surely I'll hear something about him that will give me a clue to where he went. I think he must have been trying to catch a ship from Leith; and it isn't likely he would get one so soon. Take courage, mother: it may be I'll have some good news to bring home."

"God grant it, Mary!" was Mrs. Errol's fervent ejaculation, as she rose from her knees, and proceeded to lend what assistance she could in hastening her daughter's departure.

Mary's preparations were quickly made, and she was on the point of setting out, when for the first time the thought of a hitherto undreamt-of probability occurred to her. What, if this step she was taking should endanger her brother's safety? The consideration of a possibility so dreadful made her pause for an instant; yet her acquaintances were so few, and those few so friendly, that the fear soon vanished, and, strong in the consciousness of a good purpose, she set out, leaving her mother in tears, yet roused from despair by the faint prospect of further news from that too well-beloved fugitive.

Most of us know by experience the intensifying effect of strong pain upon every faculty of the mind. We can recall certain hours wherein the minutest, most insignificant trifles were stereotyped on our mind with indelible distinctness; certain periods of agonising suspense; some sharp, unlooked-for calamity; or perhaps some prolonged physical suffering, every moment of which we counted by throbs of pain. Lasting are all such records—the records

traced by pain: whatever else we may forget, despite our efforts to remember, these remain vivid to the end.

The details of that melancholy journey never, throughout the rest of her life, faded from Mary Errol's recollection. Every stage of it was accompanied by increasing wretchedness, until, as she neared her destination, it became almost impossible to conceal her agitation.

Dusk was deepening into night when at last they came in sight of the turrets and battlements of Dunedin's citadel, and lights were beginning to twinkle over the town, as the stage coach, rattling and jolting, drew up in front of the old-fashioned inn, where it was wont to deposit its contingent of travellers.

Trembling, and almost sick with apprehension, Mary, too, alighted amid the bustling crowd which pushed and jostled her as she made her way into the inn. The confusion of sights and sounds bewildered her, unaccustomed as she was to travelling. People were arriving and departing; ostlers and porters were disputing over baggage; and barmaids were running to and fro with trays of steaming viands and foaming tankards of ale. No one had time to notice or speak to the solitary timid girl, who stood watching for someone who might be able to give her the information she yearned so much to gain.

At length, summoning courage, she inquired of mine host whether he had noticed among the travellers who came by the early coach from Lynnburgh a young man, answering to the description she proceeded to give of her brother.

"Canna say, ma'am," answered the proprietor of the "Thistle"; "sae mony are aye comin' an' gangin' ane canna tak' tent o' them a'. But if ye speer at some o' the men aboot, or at ony o' the lassies, they'll maybe be able to tell ye." And he bustled away, in answer to an urgent summons from his buxom wife at the bar.

Mary's heart sank, for she thought no one more likely than the landlord to notice the travellers who came to the inn. Nor were her other inquiries more successful.

Presently, however, the landlord came back to her, saying his wife had noticed a young gentleman like the one she was asking about, and wished to speak to her.

Mary's pulses quickened to a painful degree as she followed the man to the bar, where his portly dame was seated amid a galaxy of glittering glasses and shining silver tankards.

The woman had a kind manner, and seemed to sympathise with the pale, sad face of the young girl, whose look of bitter disappointment had caught her attention when her husband was speaking to her a few minutes ago.

"Ye were seekin' a young gentleman, ma'am, my gudeman says," she remarked in cheery, reassuring tones. "He cam' by the first coach frae Lynnburgh, I think ye said?"

"Yes," replied Mary, her heart beating with irregular and almost audible throbs. And she repeated the description she had already furnished of her brother.

"Had he a broon portmantie in his hand, and a licht grey coat on?" next interrogated the .andlady.

Mary almost sobbed aloud at those words; for Kenneth's portmanteau was a brown one, and they had missed it that morning from his room; while the coat he had been wearing was of the colour specified. Mastering her emotion, however, she answered simply:

" Yes."

"And he was tall, ye say, and had curly broon hair?"

Again Mary assented.

"Then it maun hae been him I saw come in here about twelve o'clock," promptly rejoined the landlady. "I mind him quite weel, for I thocht I ne'er had seen sae braw a man. But I canna tell when he gaed awa. Maybe some o' the lassies ken. Hey, Nancy!" she called out to a saucy-looking damsel, who was passing at the moment, a tray of jingling glasses in her hand.

The girl approached, and, being asked whether she had seen the handsome young gentleman with the brown portmanteau, who had come in that morning from Lynnburgh, promptly replied in the affirmative. Being further asked to describe his appearance and dress, she did so with a minuteness that showed how strongly her attention had been arrested by the distinguished stranger. Did she know what time he left the inn? Yes; he had merely waited to drink a glass of water, without tasting the cheese, oat-cake, and other refreshments she had put before him; and she had noticed him take up his portmanteau soon afterwards and go out. One of the stable boys had

run after him and offered to carry it for him, and the gentleman had allowed him, for he seemed very tired.

Mary at once asked to see this boy, who was presently ushered in by Nancy.

He, too, remembered the tall gentleman; for he had given him a shilling for his trouble. How far had he carried the valise? The boy said, only part of the way, for the gentleman had taken it from him, and sent him home.

Then Mary asked what road he had taken. To this question the boy could vouchsafe no positive reply, but he thought he was going to Leith harbour, for he had seen him take the road that led to it.

This information, meagre as it was, confirmed her fear that such was Kenneth's purpose. Already she was too late, it seemed; yet she would not omit any means whereby she might gain some further clue to his destination; and, requesting the boy to accompany her, she set out, with a few words of genuine thanks to the landlord and his wife for their kind assistance.

It was now dark, and the road as they advanced became more and more lonely; but no thought of fear entered Mary's mind, so absorbed was she in her burning eagerness to find her brother, and win some assurance from him that he would return ere long, and bring relief to his poor bereaved mother. On she went until her youthful guide indicated the harbour lights of Leith. Then she dismissed him, with a reward so munificent that he wished the road had been twice as far.

When, however, she reached the harbour, the difficulty of her errand presented itself as it had not yet done. Where was she to turn? To whom apply for information?

Down the long breakwater she walked, and among the docks, from which rose the black skeleton masts. She heard the sailors chanting their monotonous sing-song as they hoisted sails or hauled at ropes. One or two of them, seeing her alone in such a place, accosted her with bold, rude words that alarmed her as nothing else could have done, and caused her to hurry to a part of the

harbour where some fishermen, with their wives, were unloading a herring boat that had just come in.

From them she learned that any information about the ships that sailed could best be obtained from the harbour-master. Accordingly she took the direction they indicated, and, after considerable difficulty, found him. But when she told her errand, the man only smiled, thinking she was in quest of a runaway lover. However, the sad. yearning face touched his heart, rough man though he was, and he told her that several ships had sailed that day-a Spanish frigate for Valencia, an Italian brig for Genoa, an East Indiaman for the Indies, one for the Mediterranean, another for America, and several others besides. But, as for remembering any individual passenger, you might as well expect him to remember the size and shape of some particular wave that washed the pier vesterday.

Was there no way of discovering by what ship the gentleman she sought might have sailed?

The man shook his head; and poor Mary, yielding at last to despair, crept away in bitter grief of heart. Only now did she begin to realise how tenaciously she had clung to this forlorn hope of seeing Kenneth once more, and hearing some word from his lips that would help to keep hope alive during his absence; and the revulsion of feeling was so strong that it brought along with it a sensation of sickness, under which she staggered on, hardly knowing whither she was going.

Presently, at some distance, she saw a crowd gathered about a wharf, alongside of which lay a vessel, evidently preparing to set sail, for people were passing and re-passing on the planks stretched from its deck to the land. Might not this be Kenneth's ship, she asked; and, obeying the fond impulse, she tried to reach it. But, just as she gained the spot, and found herself among the knot of loiterers gathered there, her strength forsook her. The sound of waters rushing grew louder and louder, until it became a roaring in her ears; she seemed to be plunging headlong over a precipice. Another minute, and she had fallen prostrate on the ground.

ATALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

Subject for May—"Are long engagements desirable?" Papers not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before May 25th. The best paper on either side will be published in the magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Give an imaginary incident of mistaken identity. Give an estimate of the character of *Becky Sharp*. Write an ode, in twenty lines, to *Spring*. (Members can only enter for one of these subjects. Papers not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before May 25th.)

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (APRIL).

I.

1. Cowper. 2. From Conversations, and The Task.

H

 The Arabs generally had a verse from the Koran inscribed on the blades of their scimitars. Moore alludes to this in the quotation from Latla Rookh.
 The "Gul Sad Berk, or Rose of a Hundred Leaves," also alluded to by Moore in the same work.

III.

1. Written of Charles II, by his favourite, the Earl of Rochester, 2. James II, wished to hang seven Protestant bishops, among them Sir John Trelawney, of Cornwall. The miners of Cornwall came up from their mines and threatened to march upon London, singing these lines.

IV.

1. Henry Kirke White. 2. Charles Dibdin. 3. John Dowland.

٧.

1. A famous artist, living in the seventeenth century.
2. By Richard Barnefield, who published it a year before the *Passionate Pilgrim* came out.

VI.

1. Coleridge's "Songs of the Pixies," juvenile poems. 2. Harry Warrington, in Thackeray's Virginians.

SEARCH QUESTIONS (MAY).

I.

Where does the following quotation come from?—Give author,

"In hope a king doth go to war; In hope a lover lives full long;

In hope a merchant sails full far:

In hope just men do suffer wrong; In hope the ploughman sows his seed;

Thus hope helps thousands at their need. Then faint not, heart, among the rest:

II.

Whatever chance, hope thou the best."

Give authors of these :-

"Busy, curious, thirsty fly
 Drink with me, and drink as I;
 Freels welcome to my cup,
 Could'st thou sip, and sip it up,
 Make the most of life you may;
 Life is short, and wears away.'

"Sing we, and chant it, While love doth grant it, Not long youth lasteth, And old age hasteth. Now is best leisure To take our pleasure." III.

1. Who is the reputed author of the poem, My Mother bids me bind my hair? 2. Also, The Bay of Biscay, O? and The Minute Gun?

IV.

1. By whom was the poem written beginning ?-

"If thon wert by my side, my love,
How fast would evening fall
In green Bengala's palmy grove,
Listening the nightingale!"

2. To whom was it addressed?

7,

1. What is the title of the sonnet beginning ?-

"Alone-with one fair star for company .- "

2. Give concluding line, and name author.

3. Also this one-

"Now on the summit of Love's topmost peak."

Give concluding line, and name author.

VI.

What personage is here described?-

"A handsome, lively, quick face, full of change and motion; his hair was a silvered iron-grey."





Engraved by André & Sleigh.] BEYOND THE SHADOWS.

(By fermission of the Berlin Photographic Co.)

[FALERO pinxt.



CHAPTER XXVI. FRIENDS IN NEED.

"A COINCIDENCE, Mr. Dunbar? I should rather have expected you to call it a direct interposition of Providence. What would have become of her, had we not been on the spot at the moment?"

"True, Lady Joan: we cannot be grateful enough for it; and, but for you, I don't know what I should have done. I wish I could have seen her before going to Glenathole. I suppose I must not hope for it?"

"Quite impossible. Even if she were to awake at this instant, it would be out of the question: the doctor insists upon her being kept perfectly quiet at present. Tell Mrs. Errol to have no fears, as I won't leave her until she is really better. She might think of coming off at once for Edinburgh, you know."

"I fear even your kind assurance may not prevent her from doing so; and no one could wonder, it is so sad and strange an occurrence. I cannot dismiss the conviction that something serious is amiss, and that it is connected with Kenneth. He looked unusually embarrassed when I encountered him yesterday, and, unlike his usual candour, gave me only vague answers to my inquiries about his business in Edinburgh and his friends at home."

"The more I think of it the more I lean to your opinion. Harry hinted to me, in a letter I had from him a few days ago, that nasty reports were in circulation about him in Glenathole, and that he feared they were true. I confess, it looks very much as though he had run away, and his sister had followed him. What else could have brought

her so unexpectedly to such a place, and at night too? Didn't you say she wrote to you last Monday, without any seeming apprehension of such a thing as this?"

"Yes: she certainly never contemplated even the possibility of Kenneth's leaving home when she wrote that letter."

"Ah, I fear there is something sadly wrong with him. What misery that young man has wrought in his own home as well as in my brother's! And, should our conjecture prove correct, what a terrible blow it will be to his mother—ay, and to them all, for I think he was their idol."

"It may not be so serious as we suppose, however: God grant that it may not. But I fear I must bid you good-bye, Lady Joan, for I am anxious to lose no time in reaching Glenathole: they will be so distressed at Mary's long delay. As soon as I have delivered my message, and heard the explanation of this mysterious affair, I will return. I suppose you will tell Mary how we found her?"

"Yes, when she is calm enough to hear of it. Poor thing! how I pity her!"

"Good-bye, Lady Joan. I cannot thank you enough for your great kindness in postponing your journey. You have been a Good Samaritan to her, and to me as well; and I'm sure you won't regret it. Believe me, you have earned my lasting gratitude."

"Not a word, Mr. Dunbar: it was nothing but an act of humanity. Do all you can to comfort poor Mrs. Errol. Good-bye."

With these words, Lady Joan parted from Raymond Dunbar, and stole noiselessly into the room in which Mary Errol lay, still locked in the embrace of that deep, trance-like stupor which had mercifully interposed between her and her pain.

"Poor young thing!" murmured the kindhearted woman, as she tenderly bent over the sleeper, on whose face still rested the shadow of grief; "you must wake soon to the knowledge of your affliction, whatever it may be: may God help you to bear it."

And scarcely had she uttered the words when Mary stirred restlessly, and, while the emotions accompanying returning consciousness were reflected in rapid succession on her face, her lips began to quiver as if with the language of an unspoken sorrow, until at last the sorrow found expression in one wild, startled erv, and she opened her eyes in terrified amazement on the unfamiliar scene around her. During that slumber she had been still pursuing her quest of Kenneth, and not for several moments did memory come to her aid in her effort to reunite its severed links, and recall the precise moment when she had become insensible. Then, as the bitter truth slowly broke upon her, and she realised that her brother was really gone. her grief was such, that Lady Joan's heart bled for her. Yet she knew well, to attempt to check that outflow of pent-up anguish must be as futile as it would be dangerous; so she wisely forbore to speak until the paroxysm had passed. Then, drawing near, and laying her hand gently on the girl's head, she spoke to her in tones so sweet and sympathetic, that, almost for the first time, Mary became aware that she was in a strange room, and that someone was watching beside her bed who seemed to know her. She heard her name pronounced several times in a voice that was somehow familiar, yet she could not identify its owner, until, turning her eyes in the direction whence it came, she encountered the mild, sweet aspect of Lady Joan Douglas.

The mute sympathy in those dark, expressive eyes touched the poor girl's aching heart, and, with a sob of grateful affection, she threw her arms round her friend's neck, crying:

"Oh, Lady Joan! tell me how I came here! Where have I been?"

"All in good time, my dear," was the answer, spoken in kind, reassuring tones, as the skilful nurse caressed her patient, and laid her gently down among her pillows. "But first you must drink this; it's something to do you good. I'll answer all questions by-and-by. There, dear, you may have confidence in me, knowing what an expert doctor I ain."

Mary took the draught, and was soon fast asleep again.

When once more she awoke, the same benignant face was intently watching her; and something in its placid, chastened beauty brought a sense of comfort to her weary spirit.

It was a face remarkable enough to attract notice anywhere: the most casual observer could hardly have failed to be struck by the clearly defined features which so plainly indicated noble lineage; but more discerning eyes could detect a more subtle charm than any that merely physical perfection could confer in the expression of serene peace and wondrous tenderness which shed a glory over that face. The defacing hand of time, the withering blight of sorrow had marred its youthful beauty; traces of a fiery ordeal triumphantly endured still lingered there; vet, though wrinkles seamed the brow that had been smooth and white as marble once, and the raven hair above it was now blanched to silver grey; though the lips had lost their fulness; that beauty which, emanating from a purified soul, is independent of tint and mould, shone bright as ever in the face of Lady Joan. Like a holy influence, it made itself felt on all who came within its reach, prompting somehow to noble deeds, inspiring elevating thoughts, and suggesting hope and consolation to hearts freshly, bleeding, as was Mary Errol's then.

Beautiful as an angel's it seemed to her in that hour of deep distress. Its looks of unspoken sympathy called forth her confidence, and unsealed, her lips to utter their tale of sorrow.

Lady Joan heard it all in silent compassion; then, without trying, as superficial comforters are wont to do, to make light of the misfortune, or represent it as less serious than it appeared, she wisely and gently whispered words of hope, pointing with reverent faith to that Omnipotence which alone can remedy the devastation wrought by sin.

Her words fell upon Mary's ear like balm on a wound, quieting the wild storm of grief, and imparting strength to combat despair and face the-calamity in a spirit of resignation, and hopefulness too.

So sweet was the consolation that she for a timeforgot to wonder how it came to be administered by one who had suffered and was still suffering, though indirectly, from Kenneth's unfaithfulness. For well she knew that, if there was one on earthspecially dear to the heart of Lady Joan, it was her niece, Ada Douglas; and the wrong done to her must be almost as keenly felt as if it had been her own. Yet, despite all this, she was so far from uttering reproaches against the cause of their sorrow, that she could even speak hopefully of Kenneth's amendment, and only pityingly of his sin. Though she knew the secret of this rare charity, Mary could not but wonder at it, and her thoughts were more and more diverted from their own sad subject of contemplation to this other, no less sad.

By-and-bye, as her eyes rested on that meek, patient face, with its tale of a past anguish written indelibly there, she found courage to ask:

"Lady Joan, how is Ada now? I thought you were going to join them in Italy. Jessy told me so in her last letter."

"My dear, we must prepare to bid farewell to Ada very soon. She has received her summons to cross the dark river: we can only go down with her to the brink. May the Good Shepherd be at her side to bear her safely over.—Did you not know she was dying?"

"Jessy told me she feared it; but I hoped it might not be true," was the mournful answer, as again the tears gushed forth.

"Ah, yes! the fair flower must fade; there are some flowers too delicate for this rough clime, and she was one; I have thought so all her life."

Mary could not speak the bitter thought that was in her mind, recalled by those significant words.

After a pause Lady Joan said:

"I am going away, as soon as you are well, to accompany them home. And do you know, my dear, I was on the eve of starting, when a good providence brought you in my way. You have forgotten to ask me how you came to be here, child."

"It was my first question when I recovered from my swoon, but you did not answer it," said Mary, reminded of what appeared so unaccountable a circumstance. "Tell me now, please, for I can remember nothing after that moment when I began to feel myself falling."

"It was just then we found you," continued Lady Joan. "I had hardly got over the surprise of meeting Mr. Dunbar—but perhaps I ought to tell you first how I came to meet him," she broke off, noticing Mary's start of grave astonishment, "He had come with the people whose delicate son he is tutoring, to see them set sail for the south;

and, as it happened, I was just stepping aboard the same vessel, when we met. And while we were exchanging a few parting words, we saw the bystanders gather round something. Mr. Dunbar ran to see what it was; and never shall I forget the look his face wore when he came back with you in his arms. He seemed perfectly distracted, and scarcely knew what he was doing. By good fortune my carriage had not yet driven off, and, whenever I recognised you I got my baggage from the ship, and came straight home with you. Mr. Dunbar, of course, accompanied us: indeed, if it hadn't been for his strong arms, I could scarcely have managed at all. And so we brought you here; and truly thankful we are for the good providence that threw you in our way. Mr. Dunbar called this morning again, and now he is away to Glenathole to tell them you are safe. He said he would come back without delay to see you; and unless I am mistaken, he means to take you home. as soon as you are strong enough for the journey."

"Oh, I must go at once," cried Mary, as the recollection of that desolate home rushed back upon her. "Your kindness to me, Lady Joan, has been such as I can never repay. You have been a good angel to me in my hour of need, and I pray God to bless you. But mother has no one but me to comfort her, and I know she'll be in distress till she sees me. Oh! I must go to her at once."

"My dear child, you cannot, in your present state of weakness. Your mother's mind will be set at rest when she knows you are with me; and Mr. Dunbar will return, I expect, to-morrow, when you will hear all about them at home. So try to be patient till then; and we won't keep you a day longer than necessary."

"But I am preventing you from resuming your journey, and you are far more needed by the Douglases than by me. Please don't delay any longer, Lady Joan. If I must stay, your maid can wait on me; you need not remain."

"My dear, I have considered all that; but, if you keep as well as we wish, I expect to be able to leave you in time for the next vessel which sails for the south. I believe these matters are all overruled, so we must not fret, even when they run counter to our own plans. Now, I won't let you talk any more at present, for the doctor will be here soon, and if he finds you excited and

feverish, I fear I shall be blamed for it. There, my dear, lie down and rest. I'll look in in a few minutes to see if you have fallen asleep."

So saying, Lady Joan glided softly from the room. But her charge disappointed her expectations, for no sleep came to poor Mary's eyelids all that day. The terrible experiences she had passed through were yet too fresh and vivid to render sleep a willing visitant. Weeks, instead of hours, seemed to have elapsed since that never-to-be-forgotten moment when she stood in her brother's vacant room and realised that he was gone. Such power has pain to lengthen time. And as she thought of Kenneth, and the misery he had brought on himself and on all connected with him, her tears fell fast and thick. At times the wild desire to bring him back assumed such intensity, that it was well-nigh impossible to remain passive; then, again, Lady Joan's words of hope would recur to her, acting like oil on troubled waters, and she would endeavour to gather fortitude for the hard task before her of comforting a stricken parent "against sorrow."

To return to Mrs. Errol was now the predominant desire of her heart; and the physician who attended her, wisely concluding that the denial of this wish would probably result more unfavourably than compliance with it, finally gave his sanction to her journey home.

Accordingly next day Mary began to make her preparations, but not without an enforced conviction that there was greater cause for the doctor's hesitation to allow the attempt than she had at first supposed. She even began to doubt whether she could dispense with Raymond's convoy, as she had been intending; and when he arrived about midday, he united his remonstrances to those of Lady Joan, entreating her not to persist in her purpose of travelling home that day.

The news he brought from home, however, was not such as to induce her to yield to his request. Mrs. Errol was ill. This fact he could not conceal from her, and, aware of it, there was no longer any possibility of persuading her to remain away from her post. Even Lady Joan, when she heard the news, ceased to attempt it, and she knew Mary would have a specially careful guardian in young Mr. Dunbar. For this knowledge she was indebted to certain significant episodes which had attracted her attention on the night of their strange encounter

at the harbour, and from which she drew her own

"I believe you are right, my dear," she remarked, after the subject had been duly discussed; "for, if your mind is not at rest, there is poor chance for the body. And I can entrust you to Mr. Dunbar's care, without any misgiving."

Then, as Mary left the room to put on her bonnet, she took Raymond aside, and said:

"I suppose nothing more has been heard of her brother?"

"No, they have had no news of any kind from him. I suppose it is safest," he answered sadly.

"And did you hear particulars of this embezzlement of the government-money? Mary seems to have only a vague notion of it."

"Then she has told you the whole story?"

" Most of it, I think."

"The truth is, as Ronald Errol told me, Kenneth used two hundred and fifty pounds of the money in his hands to pay some debts. Other debts to a considerable amount have become known since. He seems to have been infatuated by his passion for that actress. Indeed, the gossips in Lynnburgh and our own village have circulated a story that he was jilted by her, and fell into intemperate habits in consequence. His brother seems to think there is truth in it. At any rate his character was ruined, and it was better for him and his friends that he left Glenathole. Ronald, I should have told you, paid up the whole sum at the custom-house next day, and he is straining every nerve to clear the remaining debts."

"Noble fellow! I should have thought it of him. I remember, when first I saw the brothers together, although my eyes were charmed with Kenneth's beauty (he was just in his teens then), my judgment approved of the other. I read constancy and real manliness in his firm, open face, and I said to myself, 'That lad will be an honourable foe, and a steadfast, true-heartedfriend.' The sequel seems to have proved that I judged them correctly. And yet, who could have helped loving that bonny lad, weak as he was?"

"His popularity was his bane: it was his friends, or at least those who called themselves such, who ruined him."

"I can well believe it: there are no enemies so dangerous as false friends. But his mother, you say she is ill. I suppose the shock of his disgrace has crushed her?"

"Yes, even more than his flight. And yet the people in Glenathole won't hear a word to his discredit: they even exonerate him, and lay all the blame on the superintendent, Mr. Lesly. It was he principally who led Kenneth astray. He never was popular among them, but he seems perfectly odious to them now."

"I am glad of that; and I am sure it will comfort poor Mrs. Errol's heart to know that people are beginning to see the truth. Harry has always said, that, had it not been for that man, his friend would never have wronged my darling as he did. Alas! he may retrieve his character, but nothing can restore her now."

"Do you think her so very ill?"

"Yes, and I dread the effect of this news upon her, should she by any chance discover it."

"When do you expect her home?"

"If her strength permits, she will arrive in three weeks, it may be longer. But here comes Mary. Poor thing, she has a double sorrow to bear."

A few parting words were exchanged as Mary and Raymond took leave of their kind friend, who, despite her own sad forebodings, strove to speak hopefully and even cheerfully to them; for on the morrow she expected to set out on her melancholy journey.

With tearful eyes and trembling lips, Mary thanked her for her unselfish kindness in a time of sore need, and confided to her many a loving message for the friends whose grief was even as her own. As usual, Lady Joan disclaimed any right to thanks, and, pressing a kiss on the young girl's pale cheek, sent her away with that peculiarly beautiful smile that might have belonged to the Angel of Hope.

A chaise stood at the door, brought thither by Raymond's foresight, into which they stepped, and were borne rapidly away to the place from which the stage-coach departed.

There was silence between the lovers for a long time, neither finding it possible to allude to their common sorrow; until at length Raymond, wishing to divert his companion's thoughts, asked her if she had heard from Lady Joan the circumstances of their strange encounter two nights ago.

"Yes, you were with the Nortons, I think she said," answered Mary. "Have you lost your pupil, Bertram?"

"I think so. The medical men have prescribed

entire change of treatment, and have put the boy into the hands of a famous doctor in Paris, who professes to be able to cure such maladies. Poor Bertram would not hear of it at first, rebelled, in fact : and I was called in to intercede. My representations had some effect, and eventually he vielded: though I fear there is much suffering in store for him, poor boy! And I was accompanying them to the vessel in which they were to sail, when I met Lady Joan. What a providential thing it was, Mary! Oh! I can never forget that moment when I saw you lying on the ground. Do you know, at first I thought you were dead, and my heart froze within me. Oh, Mary! tell me all you suffered; keep nothing back, for you know vour sorrows are mine."

"I can't speak of them," said Mary, with quivering lips. "I came to try to find Kenneth: I thought I might at least see him again, and carry a message back to poor mother. Oh, Raymond! I think this will break her heart. I don't know how I am to go home and tell her my errand was all in vain."

Grief checked further speech; and Raymond, judging that silence was best, forbore to speak until she was calm again. Then he said:

"Mary, did Lady Joan tell you I accidentally met Kenneth that day he left home?"

"She told me," assented Mary; "and, oh! how I wished some kind spirit could have whispered in your ear what he was going to do! If only you had known, you might have prevented it."

"I fear not," was Raymond's mournful answer, "The die was already cast: we could not have accomplished anything by seeking to detain him."

He did not add what his father had said to him on the subject, when they sat mournfully discussing it in the Manse the night before. "There were but two courses open to him, Ray," the old man commented; "either to give himself up to justice, or fly. In either case his character was ruined. Misguided youth! who could have believed that so promising a life would sustain a blight so disastrous? My heart bleeds for him and for his family; for it is a stain that no after rectitude can wholly obliterate."

There are few situations more painful than to witness intense grief, and yet be powerless to assuage it. Such was Raymond Dunbar's on this occasion.

" Did he say nothing that might have given you

an inkling of what he was going to do?" questioned Mary, still anxious to gain even the faintest information about her brother.

"No, nothing," was the answer. "He merely said he had come unexpectedly to Edinburgh. He seemed anxious to avoid inquiries about himself; and I thought he was unaccountably affected when I asked for you and Mrs. Errol; but our interview was so brief, that I had hardly time to notice the circumstance, until afterwards, when I began to reflect on it. But I am sure you will hear from him very soon; he is too generous to cause his friends any unnecessary pain."

Yes; Mary little doubted it. Unkind as his infatuation had made him during the past nine months, she knew that his suffering must exceed their own, and that his self-reproach would be the source of his keenest anguish. And, clinging to the hope of further news from him, she tried to prepare herself for the arduous task of administering comfort to one whose clear perceptions and total incapacity for self-deception made such a task doubly difficult.

It was very late when at last they reached Glenathole.

Ronald Errol was awaiting the arrival of the coach in Lynnburgh, and accompanied them on the final stage of their journey.

Despite his taciturnity, there was a new tenderness in his manner toward Mary, when they met after her eventful journey, which at once raised him in the estimation of her lover.

"Mother is better to-day, Mary," he said, encouragingly. "You will find her in the parlour, I think, when we get home."

Very welcome was the good news, for Mary had expected it to be otherwise; and Ronald understood her look of gratitude.

The perfect stillness of Glenathole struck strangely on Mary, as at length they reached the end of their journey. After the turmoil and excitement it seemed almost oppressive, falling on her spirit like a sad reminder that effort and struggle were useless now, and she must resign herself to passive endurance henceforth.

As they approached Cliff Cottage, Cæsar bounded out to meet them with a joyous bark, and, after greeting his young mistress in his demonstrative fashion, looked back as if in quest of his own beloved master, who never came to receive his loyal welcome. Then Betsy came trotting to the garden gate, and would fain have thrown her arms round Mary's neck; but, noticing Mr. Dunbar, she ran back into the house to announce her return to Mrs. Errol, who was sitting in her arm-chair, her knitting lying idle in her lap. At Betsy's announcement she tried to rise and meet her daughter; but, strength failing, she sank back into her chair, her fingers nervously clutching one of its arms.

Raymond, at Ronald's invitation, had entered the house, but he soon withdrew, feeling it was no time for his presence there. For a moment he saw Mary throw herself with a sobbing cry on her knees beside her mother's chair, and bury her face on that mother's breast. He heard Mrs. Errol's broken cry, "My puir bairn!" as she laid her trembling hands on that bowed head. Then noiselessly he withdrew from the scene, with a prayer in his heart for the inmates of that desolated home.

CHAPTER XXVII.

LADY JOAN.

RAIN was falling drearily on the limp yellow leaves, as a carriage swept up the avenue of Douglas Castle.

The porter's wife, as she curtseyed to its solitary occupant, caught a glimpse of the deep, dark eyes and noble face of Lady Joan, and, as those eyes were turned upon the desolate scene, the lips moved and seemed to utter the words, "Fading! fading!"

The tall, stately figure, in black velvet robes, alighted slowly, and entered the Castle, attended by a servant.

The house had been closed for several months, and now, in anticipation of the speedy return of its owners, much had to be done to restore it to its normal condition. To accomplish this, Lady Joan had come a few days in advance of the others, who were travelling homewards by slow stages.

As she crossed the hall, she asked: "Where is Mr. Harry? I expected to find him here."

- "I can't say, my lady," replied the servant. "He left the Castle an hour ago, I thought, to meet you."
- "Ah! possibly I missed him. I suppose he will come home again soon?"
- "I expect he will, my lady, when he knows you're coming. How did you leave Miss Adelaide?"

"Very poorly, Janet. I fear you will all see a sad change; but remember, no starts or crying! You must receive her with a cheerful face, for she cannot bear to see those about her sad. Be sure you caution all the others, Janet."

"Yes, my lady," answered the girl; "but do you think it's true that she won't be well again?"

"I fear it," was the low response, as the lady passed on to her room.

Soon afterwards, a rush and clatter were heard on the staircase, and presently a boisterous knock resounded on the door of the apartment.

Opening it without delay, she was nearly upset by two huge dogs who jumped and scampered round her until commanded by Harry Douglas to desist.

"Down, you brutes!" he called. "Wallace, you rascal, I'll whack you with this, if you don't behave better to a lady. Aunt, a thousand pardons," he continued, returning Lady Joan's affectionate greeting. "I fully intended meeting you at Lynnburgh, but something detained me. And how did you leave them—Ada, I mean?"

"Not any better, Harry, my boy," was the gentle response, accompanied by a compassionate look at the eager, questioning face, with its frank, open eyes, that seemed ever to send their message straight to the heart.

The young man's countenance fell, and there was a sort of querulous sadness in the tones of his voice as he rejoined:

"Why, aunt, she looked much better when last I saw her; and though this attack was unusually severe, I see no reason why she shouldn't rally again. The doctors didn't say it was hopeless."

"No, Harry; they would be loth to admit that —not more loth than we all are, you may be sure; but——"

She had not the heart to quench the hope to which he clung. But the hesitation pained him, and he exclaimed, impetuously:

"Oh, aunt! Don't say there's no hope. She will get better, she must get better. I'll not believe anything else."

"If it be God's will, nothing on earth could bring more joy to my heart," was her fervent response. "We must try to leave it all with Him, my boy,"

Harry was silent. From the beginning he had refused to believe in his sister's danger, his sanguine temperament making him willing to trust all the deceptive signs of improvement that appeared at different stages of the malady. With him the maxim, "As long as there's life there's hope," was the literal expression of that inherent buoyancy of spirit which only actual disappointment can destroy.

But when, a few days later, the baronet's carriage drove slowly to the door, and he saw his sister carried from it like a child, in her father's arms, and then recognised the fatal change which a few short weeks had wrought in her appearance, poor Harry experienced a pang, the keenest, save one, he had ever felt in all his life. He could scarcely master himself sufficiently to speak, and seized the first opportunity of retiring to his own room. There, with his face buried in his hands, he wept long and bitterly.

He did not hear some one enter, until a hand was laid on his brown curly head, and Lady Joan's calm, soothing voice said:

"Harry, my boy, this will never do; if she sees you giving way it will agitate her, and we were charged to keep her perfectly composed. We must all bury our sorrow as far as possible, and so give our darling all the help we can."

"Oh, I never believed it till now," he mournfully confessed, as he paced to and fro, wringing his hands the while.

"May God comfort you!" was all Lady Joan could reply, as she left him alone with his grief, and went away to help the other members of that afflicted household to bear their heavy burden.

As she passed along the gallery, she encountered poor Jessy, who threw herself with a great sob into her aunt's arms, and gave way to a paroxysm of grief.

"Hush, Jessy!" whispered Lady Joan, firmly, yet kindly. "Think of your father and mother; think of Ada. They need all the support you can give them. Don't give way like this."

"Oh, aunt! it's so cruel! How are we to bear it?" cried the affectionate girl, in her keen distress.

"Child, only One can help us to bear it: pray to Him," was the calm, reverential answer, as the elderly woman bent tenderly over the youthful figure that nestled against her breast as if for shelter from this the first storm of adversity that had ever burst upon her.

"Oh! but I cannot let her go!" burst from Jessy's quivering lips. "If it had only been me instead of her!"

A step was heard on the staircase, and she

sprang from her aunt's embrace into an adjoining room just as Lady Douglas drew near.

She was on her way to Ada's room, to get everything in readiness for her reception. Lady Joan accompanied her, and when their preparations were complete, she went downstairs to tell her brother that he might bring his daughter up.

For since Ada's strength declined, Sir Edward Donglas would allow no one but himself to carry her from place to place. And as she watched the almost womanly tenderness with which he wound his arms about that slight, fragile form, Lady Joan was obliged to screen her face, lest her tears should be seen.

Slowly she followed them up the broad staircase to the apartment which poor Ada had so often yearned for during the wearisome journey home. Once there, she had said, she was sure she could rest.

And, indeed, when they laid her on the familiar couch, and she surveyed the well-remembered articles of furniture and ornament, and the autumn landscape that stretched away to the distant hills on which her window looked, she heaved a deep, restful sigh, and looked perfectly satisfied.

"Now, dear, you have got back to your own old room: are you quite pleased and comfortable?" inquired Lady Douglas in tones whose assumed cheerfulness cost an effort none but herself knew, as she paused beside the invalid's couch, and adjusted one of the pillows on which she leaned.

"Quite: thank you, dear mamma," was the low reply. "Now, go away and take a little rest yourself. I don't need anything more, and Aunt Joan will bear me company for a little, perhaps."

"Of course she will," said the lady in question; and your mother must do as you say. Come," she added, turning to her sister-in-law, "you really should rest, you must be very tired."

But the mother would confess to no such feeling; possibly her anxiety prevented her from being conscious of it. She went quietly about the room, watching, and yet not seeming to watch her daughter. The anguish of her spirit might not be traced save in the unnatural constraint of her demeanour, maintained at terrible cost. She dared not trust herself to indulge the yearning fondness of her mother's heart, for well she knew, the pent-up flood, if once let loose, would burst all bounds, and perhaps imperil the frail life, already so nearly severed

from the "silver cord" that bound it. Meekly, therefore, patiently, almost cheerfully, she went about her customary duties; and never once, through all the sad days that followed, did her noble fortitude forsake her.

On this occasion, when she had quitted the apartment ostensibly to seek rest, it was only that she might hide her overwhelming anguish and implore strength for further endurance.

Her husband had preceded her. Until this moment he had not fully realised how near the parting was; but, seeing his darling child once more in the home of which she had been the proudest ornament, the fearful contrast between what she had been when she left it a few months ago, and what she was now, struck upon his heart so forcibly that he could no longer disguise from himself the inevitable truth that very soon she would be beyond the reach of all their clinging love and yearning tenderness. And the sharp pang that wrung his soul at that moment of conviction was such as made him quickly leave the room and repair to another, where he might indulge his grief unseen.

Scarcely had the door closed upon him, when Ada, laying her thin hand on Lady Joan's arm, said, in quiet, decisive tones: "Aunt, send for Mary Errol; I must see her at once."

Startled by the suddenness of the request, Lady Joan knew not what to reply. The fatal results that might accrue from an interview with Miss Errol at this melancholy juncture of affairs presented themselves with new significance and dread. For how was it possible for Mary to conceal the terrible facts of her brother's disgrace and flight? and could it be doubted that such a revelation would hasten poor Ada's end?

In desperation she merely sought to postpone what seemed an inevitable calamity, as she replied:

"Yes, darling, we will; but you must have time to recruit first; you would have little energy for speaking to her now, even if she came. Besides, we must remember Dr. Alfonso's injunction—you know what that was."

"I won't excite myself, Aunt Joan, and I am so anxious to see her," pleaded the dying girl.

"To-morrow, then, Ada; wait till to-morrow, and then you'll be able to chat with her as you couldn't do now," persuaded Lady Joan. "Won't you obey your positive old auntie once more, as

you used to do when she coaxed you to take physic?"

The young girl smiled, and laying her head on that faithful bosom, said:

"I will, my dear, good Aunt Joan. How good you have always been to me! I knew you would deny me nothing. I think you spoiled me, long ago."

"Nonsense, child; I'm sure I would have scolded you many a time, only you saved me the trouble by always doing everything I bade you before I had time to get my scolding out," was the warm reply, as Lady Joan drew her light burden closer to her breast.

There was a pause of some minutes, during which Ada seemed to be going through a long process of reflection, ere she resumed, in tones betokening unusual interest: "Aunt, do you remember how fond I used to be of stories, and how often I used to come begging one from you?"

"Of course I do, child; but what makes you think of that?" replied Lady Joan.

"Something that recurred to me just now when I was looking at your white hair," rejoined Ada.

"My hair, child? What strange fancies you have."

"Yes; once when you were telling me a story, I remember interrupting you with the question, what had made your hair so white, though you were scarcely so old as mamma; and you shook your head and said you would tell me the reason some day when I was better able to understand it. Aunt Joan, I think I understand it now; you have suffered—suffered, perhaps, as I am suffering; is it not so?"

An instantaneous change passed over the usually placid features at these last words. The yearning eyes now bent upon them could read in their rapid alternations the reflex of a great struggle going on within—a struggle so severe that Ada regretted having awakened it. But, regaining composure, Lady Joan replied, in the calm voice so peculiarly characteristic of her: "Ah, child! my sufferings have left deeper traces than in the whiteness of my hair. But why should you wish to know of them, when your own are so great?"

"Because—because——"

The young girl hesitated, a grave look settling upon her face, and her eyes growing dark with unspoken emotion, as they fixed themselves on the features whereon grief had written its tale all too legibly. Then finding language once more, she resumed: "Because I think you 'have come out of great tribulation, and have washed your robes in the blood of the Lamb.' Dear Aunt Joan, I want to have my robes washed in that blood before I die: will you show me how I can do it?"

Lady Joan could make no reply to words that touched her heart so deeply: she could but fold closer to her loving bosom that poor broken flower whose bloom was fading so fast, and silently pray for strength to guide her into the sunshine of Heaven's unending day.

For a long while there was silence; which Ada was the first to break. Seeing her aunt's emotion, she begged her not to heed her request; but Lady Joan, recovering composure, replied in a steadier voice:

"My darling, I've carried my sorrow in my own heart all my days: no one save Him that sent it has ever known that it was there; but if my sad history can help you to find peace where, all too late, I found it, I won't regret the pain of recalling it.

"I'm old and grey now, Ada; and yet I was once admired for my beauty. I did not care for it, until one crossed my path who seemed no creature of earth, but a being from the homes of the gods I had read about. From that moment all the world was changed to me: it seemed filled with but one presence. In comparison with him, all other creatures were but shadows; and in my wild idolatry, I surrendered my soul to him—ay, before I knew I was beloved. After that, I became so completely absorbed in my passion, that other affections lost their place in my heart: I lived only for Percival Rivers.

"By-and-bye, parting came, as come it must, soon or late, to all friends, and he left me for a foreign land. He was to come back again at the end of three years, when he had grown rich, to marry me; and with that assurance I comforted myself during the weary days and years that followed.

"Letters passed between us, as often as an opportunity occurred of sending them; but, after the second year had gone, there was an interval of silence, and I began to fear something terrible had happened. At last, however, news came from Percival, telling me he had been led into folly, and had squandered his money; so that our separation must be prolonged. He implored my forgiveness in such beseeching terms, that, even if I had been

angry, and not simply grieved, I must have forgiven him. I wrote without delay, sending him all the money in my possession, and urging him to return at the time agreed on.

"In course of time he acknowledged the gift, reproaching himself for his folly and unkindness to me.

"After that there was another weary interval, during which no news came. I fretted under it all the more because it was near the time when he was to start for home. At last, long after the appointed time of his return, a letter came to me—Child! every word of that letter seemed to engrave itself on my heart in characters of fire. It told me he was the husband of another. He had fallen a second time into great difficulties, and could not hope for my forgiveness, he said. But I knew afterwards, that the woman he married was wealthy, and that her wealth had been used as a bribe.

"I dare not even think of what I suffered then. No wonder my hair grew white, and my face haggard. Death itself will not cost me pangs like those that broke my heart in that awful hour.

"But it was then, child, when my idol lay shattered at my feet, that for the first time in my life I listened to the voice of God, and in my blind agony I cried out to Him for help. He heard my cry, and coming to Him weary and heavy-laden, I found rest and peace—that peace which 'passeth all understanding.'

"I went back into the world with a new purpose. Deep down in my heart I had buried that idolatrous love; but from its grave there sprang in resurrection beauty a new, a nobler love, in tune with the great love of God, which had been brought to man at such cost—the sacrifice of His Son. Henceforth I lived to solace the grief of others, and spread happiness around me. Thus I found a purer joy than I had known before, even when I counted myself happiest.

"Time went on; long years had fled, when one day a letter came to me, addressed in a hand that, despite all changes, I recognised as that of Percival Rivers. It was dated from an obscure district of London; which partly prepared me for its sad contents. He was dying, he said, and could not die in peace until he had seen me once more: would I condescend to grant this last request of one who had deserved so ill of me? I went; I found the place—a miserable hovel that seemed fitter to be the abode of beasts than human beings.

The moment I entered the wretched room where he lay, he recognised me, and turned on me a hungry, appealing look that awoke in my heart memories bitter—oh! how bitter!

"This was all that was left of the clay idol I had worshipped so passionately! Scarcely a vestige of his former beauty remained. And yet, oh! how my heart was wrung!

"He stretched out a wasted hand, timidly, as though he hardly expected I would take it; but, child, it was the hand that had thrilled me once, and I clasped it in my own, and bathed it with my tears. Not till then did I know how I had loved him.

"When he could speak, he told me, sin had led him into the marriage that had broken my heart; that it had been a curse, and not a blessing, ending in separation; and that for years he had been wandering from place to place, often in destitution.

"'I deserved it all,' he ended; 'but now I am dying, and oh! if you would only forgive me, my mind would be more at rest.'

"I told him I had forgiven him long ago, even as God had forgiven me, and urged him to seek that forgiveness too; but he only shook his head, saving, 'Too late, too late,'

"'No, not too late,' I said, and repeated to him such passages of Scripture as seemed most suited to his piteous need.

"When I had finished, he turned his yearning eyes on me and said: 'Joan—oh! will you pray for me?'

"I prayed as one only prays when death is hovering near, and never shall I forget that fervent, solemn 'Amen,' he uttered as I rose.

"At that moment, a fair child came creeping with awed steps into the room, and, observing me, ran up to the bedside and nestled close to his dying father. One glance convinced me of the relationship, and, when I turned to Percival, I found his eyes fixed on me with mute, imploring earnestness.

" 'This is your child?' I said.

""Yes,' he answered; and I saw a tear gather in his eye, as his skeleton fingers passed caressingly over the clustering brown ringlets of the little head pillowed against his cheek.

"" Who is to take care of him?" I asked.

"'No one,' he answered; and his lips quivered.

"' Will you give him to me?' I asked.

"'Oh, Joan!' he cried, pressing my hand to his lips, as the tears from his eyes rained down upon it.

"He could not say any more, but I knew what he felt.

"I told him I would come again on the morrow to see him.

"When I was preparing to take my leave, he asked me once more if I could really forgive all the wrong he had done me. I assured him I did, freely and fully, and I stooped down and kissed him.

"'God bless you, my Joan!' he said; and they were the last words I ever heard him speak.

"When I went next morning to his poor lodging, I found that the angel of death had already been there. He lay as if he were asleep; and the boy beside him, weeping passionately.

"No one but me was there to render any help to him who had once been the gay ornament of society. None but the boy and me stood by his lonely grave in the churchyard where he was laid; but if it be tears of real affection that hallow a grave, then none was ever more truly hallowed than his.

"I had but one regret—I have it still—that I did not hear from his own lips whether he had found peace. His son told me he heard him praying and repeating words of Scripture through the night, before he died; and I knew from his own words to me how deep his repentance was; yet I would have treasured only one word of assurance. It was not granted me; but I have never doubted that the prayers I offered up for him all through the years when he was lost to me, were not offered in vain, but won their answer at the last,

"I took his son home with me. I did my best to eradicate the evil of his nature, and guard him against the pitfalls I knew awaited him. It cost me years of patient watching and striving; but in the end ny labours were rewarded, for he is now a prosperous man, and, what is infinitely better, a good man, respected by all who know him. From time to time I hear from him; and when I visited him for the first time after his marriage, I received such a welcome from both his wife and him as would have satisfied greater vanity than mine. God bless them both!

"So that is my story, dear Ada. I need not tell you the lesson it teaches. We all make idols for ourselves, till God either breaks them, or opens our eyes to see their worthlessness; but sure I am the remedy so freely offered will not be withheld from you. So, my poor darling, you who are so weary

and heavy-laden, must come to Him who says He will give you rest. He knows your grief; for isn't it written: 'He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities'? and I know He will heal your bleeding heart as he healed mine."

Lady Joan bent over the fair head that reclined on her breast, and gently stroked the silken tresses, waiting for some response.

But Ada remained silent for several minutes. Looking closer, her aunt could see that a strangely solemn expression had come over her face. At length she raised herself, and said in very earnest tones: "Aunt Joan, kneel down and pray for me."

From out the fulness of her loving heart the woman prayed, beseeching the Good Shepherd to take up this wounded lamb and carry it in His bosom to the green pastures by the still waters. She spoke as if to a friend she knew well.

As she pronounced the word "Amen," it was fervently echoed by the dying girl. And He whose ear is ever open to the cry of earth's weary, sin-burdened children, who delights in mercy and is full of compassion, sent a speedy answer to this petition. For through the silent hours of that night, while the weary sufferer lay sleepless on her pillow, repeating the words, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest," there came to her yearning spirit a voice which said, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CROSSING THE RIVER.

"WHERE are you going, Jessy?" asked Harry Douglas of his sister, as he encountered her on her way to the hall-door, the morning after her return to the Castle.

She was evidently in great haste to be gone, for her shawl had been carelessly thrown across her shoulders, and Jenny was following her in the vain attempt to adjust her bonnet-strings, and to induce her to put on a pair of gloves.

"To Cliff Cottage to see Mary Errol," she replied, impatient to rid herself of her maid's persevering services, and hardly pausing for Harry's rejoinder.

"Stay a moment," said he, interposing; and, when Jenny had withdrawn, with the rejected gloves in her hand, he asked in tones impressive enough

to arrest her precipitate haste, "Have you heard what has happened there?"

"No: what has happened?" she asked in growing alarm.

"I thought Aunt Joan would have told you," he returned.

"She has been constantly with Ada since we came home," said Jessy; "I have scarcely seen her. But tell me what is wrong. It isn't anything connected with Mary, surely?"

"I'll walk part of the way with you," was Harry's response, and taking up his hat and whip, he went out with her, preceded, of course, by his two canine companions.

When they had got beyond the avenue gates, he began to relate the sad events of Kenneth's flight, and the disgrace which had led to it.

The news produced a sudden revulsion of feeling in Jessy's breast, for she had thought of Kenneth Errol only with bitter resentment, as the cause of her sister's untimely fate. Now that this terrible requital was made known to her, like all truly noble spirits, she felt only strong compassion, and was full of sympathy for him and those associated with him in his misery.

"I'm glad you told me," she remarked; "for I was thinking only of our own sorrow, and might have said something to hurt their feelings, if I hadn't known beforehand about Kenneth.—But, oh!" she suddenly interrupted herself, "how are we to keep it from Ada? I'm sure she wishes to see Mary just to speak about Kenneth, and the news will kill her."

"If you don't betray it, Mary Errol never will," was Harry's firm rejoinder.

"But how can she help it, Harry, if Ada asks her?" inquired Jessy, rightly divining the reason of her brother's absolute confidence, but fearing the circumstances of the case did not warrant it.

"Trust her, and you'll see I'm right." returned he; and as they were now pretty well on their way, he turned back, saying he need not accompany her any further.

When she reached her destination, Jessy had additional cause to thank her brother for his timely information.

On entering the parlour of the Cottage, she found Mrs. Errol in tears, while Mary was reading aloud a letter from Kenneth, which had just arrived. It had been written from Southampton, on the eye of embarkation, and was full of expressions of sorrowful love such as only true repentance could have prompted.

Jessy heard but a few words of it, for her attention was arrested by the woful alteration in the faces of both Mrs. Errol and her daughter. Even without her previous knowledge, this alone would have told that some calamity of no ordinary severity had befallen the family; and in the impulsive ardour of her nature, she threw herself into Mary's arms, mingling her tears with hers. Then, more calmly, and with instinctive reverence for a mother's grief, she approached Mrs. Errol, and affectionately kissed her.

Mrs. Errol recovered her wonted composure sooner than the two young girls, and, with her native courtesy, begged her visitor to be seated, and inquired for Ada so tenderly and anxiously, that Jessy again burst into tears.

She soon told her errand, however; and Mary, without delay, prepared to accompany her to the Castle.

During her short absence from the room, Mrs. Errol turned to Jessy, and, laying her hands impressively upon her shoulders, said sorrowfully: "My lassie, yours is a sair affliction, but oh! there's waur things than death!"

And Jessy, noticing the spasm that crossed the mother's features as she spoke the words, could not doubt their truth.

Then Mary appeared, pale, but calm, with that look of fortitude on her face which never yet was won but by painful struggles; and together they set out for Douglas Castle.

For a long time a feeling of restraint, arising from their mutual sympathy with each other's grief, kept them silent. As usual, Jessy was the first to speak. "Oh, Mary, I'm so sorry for you," she exclaimed.

"Not more sorry than I am for you," was the simple rejoinder, accompanied, however, with tokens of emotion more significant than any words.

Presently Mary asked: "Does she suffer great

"Sometimes," was the answer; "but usually she is free from it. There are days when we can scarcely believe she is——"

Jessy's lips could not frame that dread word, and once more the tears welled forth from her dark eyes, and she buried her face in her hands.

At that moment the sound of carriage wheels

approaching caused them to look up; and, recognising the doctor's conveyance, Jessy started to meet him.

"How do you think Ada is to-day?" eagerly questioned she, as he drew up beside them.

"I think she's brighter this morning," was the doctor's answer, spoken in kind, compassionate tones, as he beheld the yearning entreaty on the young face before him.

Clutching at the faintest prospect of hope, Jessy, yielding to the wild longing of her warm, loving heart, advanced, and, laying her hands upon his arm, exclaimed:

"Oh! can't you make her well, Dr. Kinross? I would give you thousands of pounds—I would part with anything if only you could save her life."

"My dear young lady," said the physician, kindly, "all that human skill can do for your sister shall be done. God knows how willingly I would restore her if I could; but you know the issues of death and life are not in our hands."

He would fain have said more, but, being an honest man, he dared not whisper false hopes, which only recoil with added bitterness in the end on these who cherish them. Perhaps there is no more trying experience in the lives of men of his profession than this same inability to furnish hope to those whose hearts are wrung with anguish at the near prospect of the final parting. Mary Errol could see how keenly he felt it as he bade them adieu, and rode off on his errand to other homes where the fell agents of death were at work.

On reaching their destination, Lady Joan Douglas met them, the same serene smile of unselfish love beaming from her face as she welcomed Mary, which had been a beacon of hope to the forlorn girl in her recent distress and helplessness.

Her own sufferings had made her quick to divine the sufferings of others; and, knowing how severe an ordeal this interview with Ada would be, she had come to mitigate its severity as far as possible by preparing Mary for the change she must expect in her friend. Taking her aside into an adjoining room, she said:

"Mary, dear, this is a trying hour for you; but I have done what I could to save both you and my darling pain. I have told her that your brother has gone from home for some time, but she knows nothing of the circumstances connected with it; and I don't think she will ask you any questions.

You will find her quite calm, and just like her old sweet self: the change is all outward. Perhaps it is less than you expected; but I can depend on your self-control even if your worst conjectures should prove correct. Now, dear, if you're ready, I'll take you up."

"I'm ready, Lady Joan," Mary quietly answered, breathing at the same time a prayer for strength to endure what she knew awaited her in that chamber upstairs.

At the door of Ada's room, Lady Joan turned and bent on Mary a smile so tenderly sympathetic, and yet so full of encouragement, that she felt nerved to follow her to the couch on which the dying girl lay.

Yes: one glance at the wax-like face with its rose-flush coming and going in the hollow check; the small, emaciated features whose outline disease seemed to have made more perfect than it had been in health; and the large blue eyes, resplendent now with a lustre too bright to last—one glance revealed the truth, that the days of Ada's brief pilgrimage were numbered. And yet, oh, how beautiful she was still! with that spiritualised beauty we believe the angels wear, and which is sometimes seen on the faces of those on whom the first rays of the glory-land are bursting.

Never before had Mary Errol felt herself so near the borders of that land as now, when she advanced to the dying girl, and took her outstretched hands—those transparent hands whose touch she hardly felt, so light and delicate it was. But as she noted the calm, deep peace of that face, a feeling akin to awe stole over her, for she knew it proceeded from no earthly source; and she dared not disturb it by the intrusion of her own grief.

"Mary!" was Ada's sole word of greeting; but what a depth of affection there was in the tone in which it was uttered!

Lady Joan only waited to see the thin arms twine themselves round Mary's neck, as she knelt beside her friend, then softly withdrew.

There was silence in the room a long time. When does language seem more inadequate to express the emotions of the soul than in such hours as these?

It was Ada who spoke first. Pillowing her head on Mary's faithful breast, and clinging affectionately to her hands, she said:

"I am so glad to see you again, Mary. Some-

times I thought I would never see your good, kind face again. And it's just as good and kind as ever, only a little sadder. But you must not grieve too much for me, dear Mary; I'm not afraid to die now. At first when I began to feel I was dying, I was in terrible fear, for I knew I had not loved God and my Saviour as I should have done; I had made an idol, and worshipped it. But God has heard my prayer, and forgiven all my sins, and I know He will be with me to the end. So I am at peace, trusting in His love."

She paused for breath; and, too much overcome to speak, Mary waited in silence until she resumed: "The bitterness of death is past; but, oh! if I had known God sooner, I would not have suffered all this. Mary," she added, with difficulty, "I put Kenneth in God's place, and, in mercy to my soul, He dethroned my idol."

The crimson had deepened on the pale cheek, and the breath was coming short and fast. Dreading the effect of agitation, Mary besought her to cease speaking. But, after a short interval, she continued: "I have something I must say to you before I die. But, tell me—I want to know, Mary—did—did he marry her—that woman?"

"No, no, my darling," burst from Mary Errol's quivering lips, as she encountered the gaze of those piteous eyes, which dilated with fear on perceiving her friend's distress. "That is all over. Ada, he was punished; she forsook him, even as he forsook you."

Mary spoke as she in her heart believed; but she was not prepared for the effect of her words.

A startled look shot from the eyes of the dying girl, and the colour left her cheek.

"Forsook him!" she echoed faintly; then, in altered tones, she asked: "And does he love her still?"

"I don't think he ever loved her, dear Ada," answered Mary; "it was only infatuation for her talents and beauty."

Ada seemed lost in thought for several minutes, and it was evident she was struggling with the wish to put another question of utmost importance to herself. Presently she asked:

"Was he ever sorry for me?"

"Oh, yes, I know he was," answered Mary. "I know he suffered remorse afterwards."

Another long pause; and then came the question,

uttered in tremulous accents: "Mary, tell me the truth; do you think he loves me now?"

It cost Mary Errol agony to reply to that question. She would have given worlds to be able to answer it satisfactorily, but this she was unable to do; for in her heart she suspected that her brother still clung to the memory of the woman he had so madly loved.

"He never spoke to me or anyone about it," she said, at last; "but I'm sure he cannot but love you, Ada, when he comes to his right mind."

The look of expectancy died out of the yearning eyes; a sigh escaped the patient lips, and Ada, smothering the last impulse of the love that had cost her so dear, turned with a cry for help to Him who alone can heal a broken heart.

She lay back on her couch, and, closing her eyes, remained motionless for some time.

With instinctive reverence for her pain, Mary forbore to disturb her by any offer of vain consolation, aware that another Voice was making itself heard at that moment in the soul of the dying girl.

After a while she raised herself, and, drawing from her bosom a tiny parcel wrapped in tissue paper, placed it in Mary's hands, saying: "I once thought he would come back to me when he knew—But that is all over; and I give this to you, Mary; I know you will prize it more than he would have done."

With trembling fingers, Mary unfolded the paper. Within it lay a shining tress of Ada's golden hair.

Blinding tears rained down her cheeks upon that last memento of a broken-hearted friend. Words would not come; and what words could have given even the faintest expression of the anguish of her heart?

"You used to think my hair so pretty, Mary," said Ada, with a smile that was sadder than tears; "and I knew my jewels would not please you so much. Keep it in remembrance of me till—till we meet again yonder, Mary, where there's no more sin or sorrow."

Mary Errol bent under the storm of grief that smote her then. Sobs shook her frame, and the tears she strove to hide came trickling through her fingers. But a thin, wasted arm stole round her neck, and drew her face close to her dying friend's, while words of blessing were murmured over her by the lips so soon to be sealed in death.

The door of the room softly opened, and Lady Joan stole in. But, seeing them thus, she would have withdrawn, had not her niece observed her presence, and motioned to her to advance.

Mary Errol rose, pressed a parting kiss onthe flushed cheek, and hastened from the room, unable to endure her bitter grief a moment longer.

On the staircase she encountered Lady Douglas. The haggard face, with its look of patient endurance, smote her with such poignant sorrow, that she broke down all at once, and caught hold of the banisters to prevent herself from falling.

Lady Douglas seemed no less moved at sight of one so closely associated with him through whom this unspeakable calamity had fallen upon her daughter's head; but all other feelings were forgotten in pity for Mary's distress, the twofold nature of which she well understood, and, gathering the weeping girl to her motherly breast, she strove to assuage her grief.

"Oh! Lady Douglas, if it had been anyone but my brother!" moaned poor Mary.

The words were overheard by some one passing through the hall at that moment. It was Harry Douglas, who had just come in with Mr. Dunbar.

Arrested by the sound of that voice which could thrill him like no other, he stood with one foot on the lowest step of the staircase, looking up as if spellbound at his mother and Mary Errol. How he blessed his mother then, as he observed how tenderly she dealt with Mary's grief! Once before, in the first bitterness of her trial, he had heard her express a regret that ever the name of Errol became familiar in their home; and all his passionate love rose up in rebellion against what seemed a disparagement of the woman whom he so devoutly honoured and admired. But now his mother commanded his veneration as she had never done before, and his heart invoked upon her head a fervent benediction.

What would he not have given to take her place, and pour out the sympathy of his warm, generous heart in Mary's ears! But he knew the wish was vain, and, desperately stifling it, he had to content himself with a low, differential bow, as Mary passed him, attended by his mother, to the hall-door.

But he took his stand at a window, from which he could see her pass down the avenue, until an envious curve intercepted his view. He was destined, however, to see her many a time during the next few weeks; for from this day Mary came regularly to the Castle, sometimes spending an hour in Ada's room, sometimes only hearing of her condition, according to the variations of the deceptive malady of which she was the victim. For there were days when even those most alarmed were tempted to doubt their fears, and indulge the hope that she might rally even yet.

Only one in the household failed to be deluded by those false indications of improvement; and that was Lady Joan. Yet no one ever saw on her features, or in her manner, any betrayal of her own conviction to damp their reviving hopefulness at such periods of apparent convalescence. Again, when some cruel relapse quenched these timid hopes and increased almost to madness the apprehensions of the others, her calm, unfailing fortitude and ready service infused courage into their failing hearts, and tended to check despair. She never seemed to require rest or attention of any kind. but was ever seeking to lighten the burdens of others, and so forgot herself. And, as Ada grew weaker and weaker, her services became more valuable; for Lady Douglas's health had begun to succumb to the long strain put upon it throughout the past months, and sometimes she was totally unable to attend in the sick-room.

Lady Joan was seldom absent from it, except when, in obedience to the urgent entreaties of her patient, she went out to walk for half-an-hour in the garden.

One beautiful afternoon, towards the close or September, on returning from one of these brief furloughs, Ada, who had been dozing nearly all day, suddenly opened her eyes, and said: "Draw up the blind, Aunt Joan; I see the sunshine streaming in beneath it, and I know it must be lovely outside."

The blind was raised, and at sight of the blue sky, and the sea sparkling in the distance, she exclaimed:

"Oh! how glorious!—I must get up to see it. Do you know I feel unusually strong to-day; I believe I could walk to the window without your arm at all, auntie."

"Very well, dear," said Lady Joan, in cheerful tones; "I won't be sorry that you're beginning to despise my old arm." And she proceeded to wrap some loose garments round the fragile form, and this done, she stepped aside, saying, with as gay a smile as she could command: "Now, dear, I'm not going to help you; you must do without me."

Ada smiled, and very slowly set her feet on the ground. Finding herself able to accomplish the few steps to the couch by the window, she looked triumphantly at her aunt, who was watching her within safe distance, and remarked:

"You see how well I can do without you now, aunt."

"Oh, the sooner I'm gone, the better," was the brave reply, as Lady Joan proceeded to adjust the cushions and the wraps on the couch.

When she had seated herself in a reclining position, Ada fixed her eyes on the summer land-scape, evidently drinking in its beauty. A smile broke over her face, and the crimson flush deepened on her cheek. For several minutes she seemed to forget everything in the pure delight of gazing on the fair prospect Nature presented.

Presently she turned to her faithful attendant, saying with a smile:

"Auntie, I see I can't do without you after all. I wish you would fetch the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' and read my favourite passage again to me. But no: you look tired. Never mind."

"Ah, you fickle little tyrant," returned the lady, with assumed playfulness; "you don't deserve that I should humour you so; but I suppose old maids must yield to wayward nieces."

And she immediately procured the desired volume, and began to read, seating herself beside her niece.

The portion selected was that exquisitely beautiful description of the pilgrims crossing the dark river that rolled between them and the Celestial City, and their ultimate arrival there.

Ada lay back and listened, gazing on the golden west over the blue hills, as if she too were catching a glimpse of the pearly gates, the golden street, and the jasper sea. A radiant smile lighted up her face, when Lady Joan came to these words:—

"You are going now," said they, "to the Paradise of God, wherein you shall see the Tree of Life, and eat of the never-fading Fruit thereof: and when you come there, you shall have white robes given you, and your walk and talk shall be every day with the King, even all the days of eternity. There you shall not see again such things as you saw when you were in the lower regions upon the earth, to

wit, sorrow, sickness, affliction, and death, for 'the former things are passed away.'

"There your eyes shall be delighted with seeing, and your ears with hearing the pleasant voice of the mighty one. There you shall enjoy your friends again, that are gone thither before you: and there you shall with joy receive even every one that follows into the holy place after you.

"Now I saw in my dream, that these two men went in at the gate; and lo! as they entered, they were transfigured, and they had raiment put on that shone like gold. There were also that met them with harps and crowns, and gave them to them—the harps to praise withal, and the crowns in token of honour.—Then I heard in my dream that all the hells in the city rang out for joy, and that it was said unto them, 'Enter ye into the joy of your Lotd.' I also heard the men themselves, that they sang with a loud voice, saying, 'Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.'

"Now, just as the gates were opened to let in the men, I looked in after them, and, behold, the city shone like the sun; the streets also were paved with gold, and in them walked many men with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing praises withal.

"There were also of them that had wings, and they asswered one another without intermission, saying, 'Holy, holy, is the Lord!' And after that, they shut up the gates, which when I had seen, I wished myself among them."

During the reading of this passage Sir Edward Douglas had quietly entered, and taken up his position behind his sister's chair.

Observing him, Ada smiled, and beckoned him to her side. He came, and, seating himself on the edge of the couch, wound his arm round her, and drew her head on to his breast.

On the conclusion of the above passage, Ada said, in a low, calm voice: "Stop there, Aunt Joan; I'm satisfied. No wonder the dreamer wished himself among the happy pilgrims. I too——"

An involuntary shudder that passed through the baronet's sinewy frame at this moment checked the words she was about to utter.

After a few minutes he said:

"How is my Ada now? Better, surely?"

"Oh, yes, papa; I feel very well this afternoon, stronger than I have been for a good while," she replied, with one of her old sweet smiles; adding, shortly afterwards: "Do you know I mean to give you all a surprise to-night?"

Lady Joan turned round quickly from the window, and exchanged looks with her brother, who immediately inquired:

"What surprise do you mean to give us, darling?"

"Ah! you mustn't try to cheat me out of my secret, papa," she responded. "Just wait and see."

But when he had withdrawn, she summoned her aunt to her side, saying:

"I have set my heart upon taking tea with them all once more in the drawing-room. It's the room I like best, because it's so bright and cheerful. And Harry will take me down. Don't look so grave, dear auntie; I am very well to-night, and—it may be the last time."

"Oh, my darling! I'm afraid to let you have your way in this fancy," expostulated Lady Joan, with a dread foreboding at her heart. "Would it not be better to let me wheel you into my boudoir, where we could all take tea with you, and save the fatigue of your going downstairs?"

"Oh! let me have my wish, dear Aunt Joan," pleaded the invalid; "I have such a craving to be downstairs once more among them all."

Lady Joan, perceiving this was no mere whim, forbore to remonstrate further; and, at Ada's request, summoned her maid to assist in getting her ready.

The girl gazed as if stupefied, on hearing what she was required to do; and even Lady Joan looked aghast when Ada demanded a white cashmere dress, and one or two ornaments she had been accustomed to wear in the evening.

"Brush out my hair, Jenny," requested she, "but gently, you know. I won't ask you to coil it up; I only want it smooth and not so dishevelled as it has been of late."

Awe-struck at this sudden and unaccountable change, the maid obeyed, hardly able to handle the brush carefully enough, so afraid was she of causing the slightest discomfort to that dear head; and, despite Lady Joan's menacing looks, tears stole down her rosy cheeks, while she combed out the long silken tresses.

When the dress had been put on, and a soft shawl wrapped round the attenuated shoulders, Ada asked: "Now, if any one would fetch me one of my favourite white roses, I think my toilet would be complete."

Jenny flew to the garden to procure one, presently returning with the flower, which Ada placed in her breast.

"Now, I'm ready," she said. "Has Harry come home yet?"

"I'll go and see," replied Lady Joan.

In a few minutes she returned, not with Harry, but with the baronet and his wife, whose scared faces betokened how grave were their fears.

But when they beheld their daughter, looking so much more like her former self, they were fain to trust the flattering signs of improvement, and hope even against hope.

Sir Edward, with a gentleness that bespoke the father's heart, took up his light burden, and his wife followed him from the room.

Lady Joan remained, and, closing the door, sank upon her knees, weeping bitterly, and yet earnestly praying. Perhaps none of the household knew how much they owed to her prayers that night.

When, shortly afterwards, she went down to the splendid apartment, whose white pillars and arches looked still whiter in the rays of the westering sun, and whose mirrors glittered as the light struck them, her eyes were too much dazzled to at once descry the group assembled at the other end of the room.

On a low divan of green velvet Ada was reclining, her mother seated beside her, pretending to stitch at some embroidery, but in reality watching her daughter's face. Sir Edward was nervously pacing up and down the room, chatting from time to time with Ada, as cheerfully as he could, but failing to conceal his restless anxiety about her. Jessy was making an unnecessary jingling among the tea-things on a small inlaid table close at hand, which she made believe were not properly arranged. Stephen, now a tall, slim youth, had thrown himself at his sister's feet, and was reading to her, now and again, from his favourite Shakespeare.

When Lady Joan, after remonstrating with Jessy for making such a fuss with the porcelain and silver, joined the group, she placed herself by Ada's side, and asked how she felt, now that her wish was gratified.

"I'm very comfortable and happy," was the quiet answer, accompanied by a corroborating smile.

Why did Lady Joan so suddenly avert her face, and go to the window on pretext of screening the light from Ada's?

Tea was now brought in, and Jessy was preparing to make it, when Ada intervened with a request that they should wait till Harry's return.

The servant was about to take it away, when he opportunely arrived.

On seeing his sister there, his astonishment

knew no bounds. The happiest smile they had seen upon his face for many a day illumined it then. "Bravo!" he cried, coming forward with affectionate eagerness. "You're looking almost as well as ever, Ada; we'll be having you down to breakfast soon, and fatten you up with some of Crawford's excellent porridge. Won't we, mother?"

And, indeed, at that moment, keener vision than his might have been deceived by the radiant beauty of that sister's face.

He took the place at her side which his father had just vacated, to fetch a cup of tea for her; and passed his arm round her waist. Then, looking toward the tea-table, he said, addressing his mother:

"I hope you've kept some tea for me, mother, and not allowed Jessy to appropriate my share."

"You have come too soon for me to get mine," retorted Jessy, gulping down a mouthful to conceal the failure of her jest.

Harry brought a cup of tea from the table, and drank it beside Ada, trying to talk on trivial subjects for the mere sake of talking; congratulating "the invalid" on her restoration to polite society; bantering his Aunt Joan for not donning attire more bentting a select drawing-room, &c.

Yet, despite all his efforts, he could not prevent ominous silences now and then.

During one of those painful intervals, Ada said: "My happiness would be complete, if only Mary Errol were here."

A blush suffused the tell-tale face of Harry Douglas at mention of that name; but, as his sister's eyes were turned to him, as if she wished, and yet feared to ask him to fetch her friend, he at once volunteered to carry the message.

Ada knew his secret, and pitied him; but, when she sought to prevent him from going, he refused to listen to her, and straightway announced himself ready to set out.

"Thank you, Harry," she gratefully replied; "I think you deserve a kiss for being so obliging," and, pressing her thin hands on his blushing cheek as he stooped down to receive his meed, she kissed him several times.

He hastened away, lest she should see the big tear that trembled on his eyelid; and was soon galloping at full speed across the valley to Glenathole.

As she watched his lithe, handsome figure

disappear, Ada turned to her aunt, and said with loving pride: "Isn't he a good fellow?"

Lady Joan warmly assented, and rose to lower a blind at the opposite window.

Following her movements, Ada caught a glimpse of the gorgeous colouring in the western sky, and requested to be brought nearer to the window. The divan on which she rested was wheeled to a spot from which she could command the whole scene without being exposed to the glare of light.

A rapt expression came over the face of the dying girl, as she gazed on that resplendent glory. Over the distant mountains, behind which the sun was slowly sinking, one large cloud lay brooding; and when the glowing orb had disappeared from view, its edges became braided with gold. Presently, as if parted by an unseen hand, it opened, its two sides taking the form of two enormous gates, whose curved outline was overlaid with gold. Between, the sky appeared like a serene sea of pale green; while long shafts of radiant light shot down upon the landscape.

In silence they watched the sublime picture, until the colours began to fade. Then, with a strangely beautiful smile, Ada whispered to her aunt: "The gate of Heaven."

A change came over the face of Lady Joan, for she saw a radiance in the blue eyes that made her tremble; and she hovered constantly about the seat on which Ada lay, as if afraid to lose sight of her for a moment.

"Papa, how long will it be before Harry comes back?" Ada presently inquired, in tones that betrayed unusual earnestness.

"Fully half-an-hour," was the answer. "Are you growing very impatient, dearest?"

"I fear I am," she assented. "I hope they won't be long."

A few minutes later, she asked: "Where is Stephen? I want some music."

The boy came from one of the windows near, at which he had been sitting, screened from view by a curtain.

"What shall I play?" he asked, regarding his sister with peculiar tenderness, and with a sort of awe, as he noticed her strange loveliness.

"I like that slow music of Purcell's in 'The Tempest,' you used to play," she answered. "You might let me hear it again."

He went to the piano, and began the piece.

His touch was clear and delicate, the expression with which he rendered any piece compensating in some measure for the lack of mere mechanical skill. The instrument responded to his touch in full resounding tones that filled the room.

"Now let me hear Mozart's 'Gloria in Excelsis,'" requested Ada, at the close of the piece.

The boy complied; and as she lay back on the ottoman, Ada's slender white fingers kept beating time to the music, while her eyes were fixed on the crimson west, whose reflection dyed the pillars and arches of the room, suffusing everything in its rich glow.

Beside her sat her mother; Lady Joan occupied a chair opposite; and Sir Edward slowly paced to and fro. Jessy flitted about between the ottoman and the piano.

Stephen was still playing, when suddenly Lady Joan rose, and made a signal to him to stop. The movement, slight though it was, attracted the notice of everyone in the room. Lady Douglas sprang to her daughter's side. Her husband, arrested in his walk, rushed forward, with a face livid with terror, and bent over the motionless form, thinking his child had fainted.

The head with its halo of golden hair lay back on the cushion; the tapering fingers seemed still to be beating time to the music; and the sweet face was like that of a deep sleeper. But when they looked closer, the awful stillness brooding on those calm, marble-hued features told them that never more on earth would that sleep be broken.

Lady Douglas uttered one long, piercing cry, such a cry as only breaking hearts can utter, then fell back insensible. Her sister-in-law caught her as she fell, and called to her brother to come to her help.

He had been too much absorbed in his own wild consternation to notice his wife, and, at his sister's summons, he turned toward her with a look of helpless distress, as though terror had paralysed his faculties.

Lady Joan approached him reverently, and tried to lead him away; but he still hung over that motionless form, as if he could not leave it, till she said, gently and solemnly: "She's in Heaven now, brother."

He looked again; he laid his hand on the placid brow, already beginning to grow cold; then shuddering violently, he sank on his knees beside the dead, and cried, in heart-rending accents: "Oh, my darling! Oh, Ada! my precious one! Would God I could have died for thee!"

"Edward, see—your wife!" pleaded Lady Joan, when the paroxysm had passed.

Then he rose, and crossed to where the unconscious mother lay.

Jessy, with a wild scream, had thrown herself down beside her sister's motionless form, and kept wailing piteously: "Ada, my Ada, oh, come back to me!"

Stephen lay on a sofa, sobbing as if his heart would break.

By this time all the servants in the Castle, had heard the sad tidings, and came crowding into the hall: some of them stood at the door of the drawing-room, with awe-struck, terrified faces, longing, and yet afraid to enter.

But at this juncture, they drew back to admit two persons whose eager steps had been at that moment suddenly arrested.

"Oh, aunt, is it possible? only an hour since she spoke to me, and now——" cried Harry Douglas.

He could not finish the sentence; and Lady Joan's tears fell the faster when she saw those that gushed from his eyes as he passed on to the place where all that remained of the sister he had loved so well was lying.

But which of all the mourners in that chamber of death suffered as keen a pang as pierced the heart of Mary Errol in that dread hour, when she looked upon the dead face of her whose innocent life had been thus untimely cut off? Whose hand had dealt the blow? Once again the lament rose to her lips:

"Oh! if it had been any one but my brother!"
"Child, her griefs are all over now; she's happier
than any of us," said the calm voice of Lady Joan.

And gazing at the fair, sweet face, with its expression of perfect peace, Mary could not doubt that, after her brief but troubled passage across life's perilous sea, she had reached at last the haven against whose adamantine walls storms never beat.

STORIES OF SOME FAMOUS PICTURES.

HI.—THREE FRENCH MASTERS.

By Kineton Parkes.



RANCE has not produced a painter of overpowering genius, as Italy and as Holland have done, but the history of French art contains the record of a long line of famous men whose works are exhibited in public

and private collections all over the world with pride, and owned with gratification. It is in this present century that French painting has reached its greatest excellence, and it may well be that the closing years of it may witness its greatest triumphs in this respect. When the technicalities of an art are developed to the last degree, decay follows, and there is no doubt that French artists of the present day have so developed, helped by the perfect resources of the great schools of Paris and the studios of its eminent masters. Paris and London are to-day the universities to which all students of painting aspire; Antwerp and Brussels are only less attractive, but Paris is pre-eminent. and the crowding of its ateliers reminds one of the popularity of the mediæval university at Paris, than which no other was held in greater regard in its time. As in the Paris of the Middle Ages at its height the pedantic learning of a declining age gave way to a splendid outburst of humanistic sentiment, and learning became the handmaiden of humanity, whereas before, humanity had been subdued to the artificial needs of pedantry, so it may be, the artificiality of art at the present day may lead eventually to a new birth as fruitful as that first renaissance which so altered the whole of European thought and feeling. In the course of the progress of French art, this tendency may readily be traced. French painters have striven for the perfection of technique, and they have achieved infinite grace; but only in some cases has nature been too strong for them, and they have

then achieved strength. The French painter or to-day and his English confrère have deduced a system in which nature has no part, and in which the aim of the artist is to copy as little from nature as he may; and as long as beauty is the product, there is nothing to find fault with in the system. There is, however, another art which is less artifice and which strives, knowingly or unknowingly, to render the aspects and feelings of nature, and this has been very strong with some of the greatest of the men whose names are great in French art history. Claude did his utmost to seize every phase of nature, no matter how transient it might be, and he achieved much of what he strove after. though a tendency towards a classical style often marred his excellent intentions. Greuze, on the other hand, strove after the artificial, but fortunately was constrained to recognise that his métier was to depict scenes illustrative of the passions and feelings of human nature.

The greatest of all in these things was Millet, for in his work nature and human nature meet in a beautiful harmony, and meet, moreover, in a way absolutely new and unique in art. But Millet, too, had his period of indecision, when other than the truth which was to guide his life and his art had seized upon him. The period was short, however, and early the greatness of his mission seems to have impressed itself upon him. In some respects, Millet is the foremost of the artists of France, for he was a great genius, as many were not; and while many of the works of the lesser men are fine paintings, there are several of Millet's canvases which are veritable revelations.

The three names chosen for treatment in this paper are those of men supreme in their respective domains in French art: Claude, the master of landscape; Greuze, the master of genre; and Millet, the master of expression; and the three



THE BEACON TOWER. By CLAUDE.

have an intimate connection, inasmuch as in the last of them the excellencies of the two former seem to be united and surpassed. In them we have representatives of three centuries of French life. Claude for the seventeenth, Greuze for the eighteenth, and Millet for the nineteenth—the last truly reflecting the sorrow and travail of life as it has come to be in all its actuality and bitterness.

Claude Gelée, or, as he is more commonly called, Claude Lorraine, from the fact that he was born in that province at Champagne, first saw the light in the year 1600. His parents were very poor, and both died before he was twelve years old. It is said that the culinary art first occupied his attention, which may or may not be true; but, on the death of his parents, we know that he proceeded to Freiburg, and there made the acquaintance of the plastic arts, for he helped his elder brother, who was engaged there as a woodcarver, and provided him with designs. Not content with this limited area for his talent, he made his way to Rome; but here his want of manners and education, and his ignorance of Italian, effectually prevented him from obtaining the employment he desired. He wandered on to Naples, and here succeeded in attaching himself to Godfrey Waals, a landscapist, with whom he spent two useful years. Returning to Rome, his previous training with pastrycook in his native village and with painter at Naples seems to have recommended him to the notice of Tassi, and in Tassi's establishment he mixed paints and cleaned the floors. From his master, however, he gleaned much of the information and the knowledge he required, and in a little time, Tassi, hoping to make still further use of his drudge, taught him the elements of perspective and other matters. Although Claude devoted himself with enthusiasm to the study of art, his enthusiasm for nature was even greater. He seems to have looked at art through nature, rather than at nature through art. He must inevitably have seen and admired the great masterpieces of oil and fresco painting at Rome so ready to his hand; but his own particular inspiration was gained from a personal acquaintance with nature and her works. He was the first naturalistic painter, for he went to nature for his effects, and ignored the pictorial effects of his predecessors. Whole days were devoted to this occupation, and his sketches of passing effects of cloud and sunshine were very numerous. Having learned as much as was possible from Tassi, and having also helped him in the painting of his pictures, he left him and commenced a protracted ramble through Italy, Germany, and France. This was of the greatest use to him, for he was learning his lesson the while, Nor were his journeyings without adventures. Gaining thus health and knowledge, he reached his native province, and the Duke of Lorraine gave him commissions, and he worked under the duke's painter, Karl Dervent, for a year. He painted subjects on the ceiling of the Carmelite Church at Nancy, and other work; but all the time wished again for Rome. Returning thither in 1627, he at once became popular, under the protection of Cardinal Bentivoglio and Pope Urban VIII.

As Claude was the first naturalist, so he was the first landscape painter in France. Hitherto landscape had been very much a matter of the imagination and the rules of perspective, but Claude gave it its proper place as one of the highest branches of the art of painting. Conventions still were with him, but only naturally, for the boldest innovation can never break away absolutely and entirely from tradition at once. Temples and figures abound in his pictures for the most part, but a much greater artist, Turner, retains these anachronisms two hundred years after Claude's time; and it is only recently that landscape, pure and simple, without any extraneous interest whatever, has come to be appreciated. Claude's landscapes are numerous, and may be seen in most or the galleries of Europe; their beautiful and suave colour and their exquisite skies are among the finest things in art. His Libri di Verità is a famous document which has been preserved and published; it was a book in which he made drawings of those pictures he sold, with particulars. This, at the time, was to circumvent the picture-forgers, then very busy; but the book to us is as precious a document as we could have of this great artist, who died in 1682 at a ripe and honoured old age.

Jean Baptiste Greuze was born in 1725 at Tournus; and had to contend against his father's wishes when he chose to become an artist. He was early associated with the portrait-painter Grandon of Lyons, and of his son-in-law, Grétry, the celebrated composer of comic opera. He went



PORTRAIT OF A GIRL. By GREUZE.

early to Paris with Grandon, and studied in the academy of painting there. He was purely Paris trained, and no outside influences seem to have affected him. The artificiality of the time he possessed in no small measure, although he, in common with some of the more fearless spirits of the age, uttered a protest against it in his work. This work conveys a very wholesome and thorough view of life, and although he tried to imitate the great so-called historical and academical painters of the time, the natural bent of his talent fortunately prevented him from going far in this direction. His historical pictures were never successful, but in the region of genre painting, he had no rival. domestic scenes which he depicted upon his canvas won for him a ready acceptance: little as his powers had been anticipated by his colleagues. his pictures won a hearty welcome at the annual exhibitions. He was industrious, and one year alone he exhibited no less than thirteen canvases. His style of work is not much different from that of the other painters of the time; he was not great in his technique, but his class of subjects was popular from the fact that there was already, in 1765, when he was most famous, a distinct yearning for a less artificial mode in art and in life. Greuze also painted portraits, and many of his studies of heads have become celebrated, and may be seen in the great galleries of England and the Continent. His life was an uneventful one, the chief episode in it, perhaps, being his quarrel with the members of the Academy of Fine Arts. He died in the Louvre in 1805, and for all his success, he died poor.

Jean François Millet was born at Gruchy, in Normandy, in 1814. The son of a peasant, he throughout life silently asserted how much dignity and even majesty may sometimes be the portion of the lowliest born. He never desired any station in life which would remove him from the associations of his earliest years. Apparently, he only left his home to learn the mechanism of his art, because it was not possible for him to do so there, and he was never happy until he at length settled down again at Barbizon, in the Forest of Fontainebleau, in a cottage, where he lived until his death, in 1875.

The incidents of his life are few. He went to Cherbourg to Mouchel, a teacher of painting, and he copied in the Museum there. The people of Cherbourg seem to have discerned his genius, and they sent him to Paris, to further his studies. The money they gave him was very little, and the Paris experiences were by no means bright. He married, and his wife died. He married again, and supported himself and his family by selling his sketches and studies, which he did at an absurdly low price. Never, during his life. which was one of constant penury, did he obtain an adequate price for his work. It was in the year 1849 that he commenced his life at Barbizon, and here, for a quarter of a century, surrounded by his family, he painted those beautiful works which are now universally admired, and which, when sold, fetch more than their painter ever earned in his whole life. Millet was much beloved by his family and his neighbours, and his death was deeply lamented. The reception which his work received at the hands of the critics was very varied: many refused to see in it merit of any description, while others declared him the great painter he undoubtedly was.

This latter opinion is the correct one, for, after all, the art which has the most universality of application is the one which will survive the longest; and if Millet's pictures appeal to lovers of art in all parts of the world to-day, it is only natural to suppose that their appeal will be co-extensive in point of time. That there is a greater art than that of Millet, no one will dispute; but no one can deny that there is none which can have a deeper or more potent appeal to ordinary human nature. It is true and essential realism, for it succeeds in arresting attention by the very transparency of its fidelity. The peasant, and the conditions under which he lives, are told with absolute truth, and there is some reason for the epithet which has been applied to Millet's art-that it is literary, rather than plastic. His pictures are, in fact, documents, and, moreover, of the deepest human significance. Further than this, they are undoubtedly narrative, in a sense, for they tell a distinct story, generally a very mov-

Perhaps the two pictures of Millet's which are best known, are "The Angelus" and "The Gleaners"; certainly they deserve to be best known, for they are his two greatest works. In "The Angelus," we have portrayed one of the most salient characteristics of the French peasantry



THE ANGELUS, By MILLET.

—their unvarying piety. In the middle of a huge and hardly cultivated field, a male and female worker stand in an attitude of prayer, while one almost hears the angelus ringing from the distant church. This is the episode of the picture; but it has a far larger and grander expression than this. It depicts the life of a whole race—its frugality, its rigidity, its impassivity, as well as its piety—and it presents, moreover, a beautiful landscape study. "The Gleaners" has more of positive abstract beauty than "The Angelus"; but its power of expression is very much below the finer work. It tells of toil; but there is not the fatality about it which "The Angelus" possesses.

The group of artists with which the name of Millet is associated, and which included also Théodore Rousseau, Diaz, Corot, and Daubigny, was called the Barbizon School, from the locality in which its members worked, and the School is, perhaps, better known than any other of the last fifty years. It was the most important movement in French art this century, and it approximates in its essentials to the Norwich School of our own country. Its principles, however, are even more uncompromising, and naturalism, if not always realism, is its main goal. It is the School of plein air, par excellence: whatever later pleinairists have done subsequently is due to it, and we undoubtedly owe much of what is most interesting in contemporary painting to the influence of the Barbizon men. However potent other movements of the century in art may have been, yet there is no doubt that the movement at the head of which Millet worked has done more to leaven the art of our time than any other. Its influence has not, by any manner of means, been a local one, but one, rather, that has been felt all over the civilised world where the art of painting is practised.

THE HAPPY HALT.

(FROM THE FRENCH.)

T

IND housewife, prithee do not feed
The fire that now we hardly need:
'Tis well enough without that blaze—
Husband thy wood for harder days:
Dried am I, warm'd, and comforted.

She let me talk, and all the same Threw on her wood and fed the flame: "Come, soldier, closer come," she said.

II.

But, friend, I have no need to dine, So spare thy store of food and wine; Rations I had in camp to-day. Refold this fine white cloth, I pray (Too fine for me), that thou hast spread.

She let my vain remonstrance pass, And set my bread, and filled my glass; "Eat, soldier, eat and drink," she said. 111.

These dainty sheets like driven snow Thou must not lay for me! no, no; Thy cowhouse and clean straw will keep Me snug as any king asleep, Not envying any king his bed.

I wasted breath, I had my say, And she, dear woman, had her way: "Rest, soldier, rest and sleep," she said.

IV.

Good night: good morn, and kind good-byes, I lift my knapsack—new surprise!
'Tis heavier much, than when I came!—
Dear soul, thou puttest me to shame;
Why, why, thus pamper'd, housed and fed?

With half a tear, and half a smile
Upon her tender face the while:
"My boy's a soldier, too," she said.

NARY BROTHERTON.

OCCUPATIONS FOR GENTLEWOMEN.

VI.-NURSING.

By DARACH.

ONCE heard a young girl remark that if she were not married at twenty-five she would like to become a nurse-a nurse for soldiers and sailors. Now, being a young girl of fortune and some personal attractions, I think it most probable -happily for the hospital to which she intended offering her services-that she will get married. But I should like to have asked that girl why her wish for entering a hospital was restricted to the naval and military branches of it. I should like to have proposed the children's division, but I feel sure that this idea would not have offered the same attractions to her. As she had no medical knowledge, her reasons for declining to take any interest in that special section, could not have been those of an experienced nurse, who generally prefers working in the adult wards, as the cases in these are of much greater variety and of much more medical importance than those commonly found in the children's ward.

This maxim does not, however, apply to naval and military hospitals, as the cases brought in there are often nothing more than a squeezed finger or sprained ankle, which, though they may render the patient unfit for service, and therefore of necessity the inmate of a hospital, require no particularly skilful treatment, and are of no special value to a studying nurse. Therefore, what our young girl's reasons are for only wishing to nurse the people who make up the defence of our country, I cannot be expected to explain. Possibly some idea of tending, with her own fair hands, the valiant heroes. who have been wounded for the sake of our national glory, inspires her; but such poetical sentiments are quite out of place in a hospital, and would indeed be very quickly dispelled once practical work had begun.

But still these ideas exist, and many a young girl comes to a hospital for no better reason. She thinks she has a talent for nursing; possibly, too, she thinks that the dress of a nurse is very becoming. The idea of being an independent woman, who can walk about safely even in Whitechapel and other districts where policemen and common human beings "fear to tread,"

has its charms. Her talent for nursing has, perhaps, till now only evinced itself in smoothing the pillows, holding the cooling draught to the parched lips of the patient, seeing that the light does not shine into his eyes, and gliding about the room with noiseless steps. The hours of quiet watching in the darkened room, with its hushed atmosphere, has a soothing, elating effect on the young nurse's feelings; and as she softly closes the door behind her, whispering the doctor's instructions to the maid who is to take her place, she steals down the stairs with a look of importance on her face, and goes into the drawing-room, where a cheerful fire, her tea, and her novel are awaiting her, and sinks into the most comfortable arm-chair with the luxurious feeling of really having earned a rest. That is her experience of nursing!

Now, I do not at all wish to underrate a clever hand, a light step, and an eye that is open to all the wants of the patient. On the contrary, they are of great value, especially if they are natural gifts; but they are by no means, as so many people seem to think, the chief characteristics of a good nurse. Indeed, it seems to me that a would-be nurse need not have any "chief characteristics" except those of a woman who does her duty conscientiously and with energy, and sticks to it through thick and thin. I do not wish herewith to say that every girl who possesses these qualities would be suited for a nurse. The art of nursing is like that of writing-either the candidate must have a passion for it that will enable her to overcome and conquer all the obstacles that are in her way, or circumstances must force her to earn her livelihood, and so make her accept hard work and difficult positions which in other conditions nothing would have induced her to submit to.

But, on the other hand, without energy and a strong sense of responsibility, let no girl take upon herself to become a nurse. With very little consideration girls leave their homes and come to a hospital because they cannot endure home life: possibly they do not get on with their family; or they feel no interest in the things around them; and it bores them to have to write the

daily notes, and to look after the daily luncheons and dinners. Life is too humdrum for them, too uneventful and too small: they long for the big open world, and for a wider sphere to work in. The idea of devoting their life to others is a very noble one, but it would be better if they would first look well around them. The grand holy work of nursing, though its horizon may be wider than that of home-life, consists of the same kind of duties: the tasks involved in it are just as trivial, and just as tedious. And in most cases it is easier to put up with difficulties in your family than with the trials of nurses and sisters whom, though they may be most unsympathetic to you, being your superiors, you must obey implicitly and without contradiction. Of course, you may be strong enough and patient enough to conquer all obstacles, but it would be better and much more advisable to test these qualities at home before embarking on so great an undertaking.

Does one girl in ten really make it clear to herself that, apart from little difficulties and trivial matters, the position is one of the greatest responsibility, and requires both bodily strength and a great deal of nerve? To be on your feet from 6 A.M. till 9 P.M., and not to have a monient to yourself except at meal times, is in itself no light matter; but the work, the sights, the smells which must at first necessarily seem repulsive and frightful, ought to be seriously considered.

I once knew a girl who had never been inside a hospital till she became a nurse, where her first post was in the men's surgical ward! Naturally, it was a hard trial, but the hospital cannot take into consideration the feelings of every young girl. On my inquiry whether the sight of some of the operations had not made her feel faint and sick, she replied, "No, I had no time to think of that; I knew that everything depended on my being ready and able to do my work, and that if I gave way the patient would suffer for it." I have no doubt the knowledge that everything depends on one's self, and that one dare not fail, gives one courage and help to bear what would otherwise seem beyond one's strength; but still the strain must be fearful to one wholly unaccustomed to the work; and it is certainly not a situation to be entered upon lightly and without due consideration.

A sister once told me that some of the greatest trouble and vexation given in the hospital comes from girls who "think they will become nurses," and are full of goodwill and hope, but cannot fasten their own dresses without help, and have never been accustomed to do their own hair. And then they think they can nurse! Inevitably, their work falls upon others, and instead of attaining the excellent object of being a help to their fellow-creatures, they are only a hindrance to those who are seriously engaged in that work. "Let them first learn to make their beds and sweep their rooms at home, before they come and try to nurse sick people," said the nurse. And I think it excellent advice to any girls intending to go into a hospital.

A few more words to those people who deem it unsuitable for a nurse to go to amusements or entertainments of any kind; and seem to think that working in a hospital involves as certain isolation and retirement from the rest of the world as if the hospital were a Roman Catholic convent. Of course, all have a right to their own opinion, but let them beware-lolling in their fashionable drawing-rooms and gossiping-how they judge the women who are on their feet and busy attending their suffering fellow-creatures twelve hours of the day! I once heard a girl say that nothing would tempt her to go to theatres or dances after being in a hospital all day. "It was heartless to be able to enjoy gaieties in the evening after being in such close contact with sickness and sorrow all the day." She enjoyed such gaieties very much, but then it is true her day was not taken up in watching the beds of dying people. She was busy shopping all morning and driving in the Park all afternoon. She did not come near want or pain from one year's end to the other. But if, on her way to the Park, she did happen to meet a poor man being carried into St. George's Hospital, whose face was cut and bleeding, and whose leg had been squashed by an omnibus, I have no doubt that she hastily turned her head away; and I have no doubt, too, that the remembrance of the sight sent a shudder through her in the midst of her brilliant soirée.

But to my mind that is no reason why the woman who had helped to bandage that man's or some other person's equally bad cuts, should not enjoy some relaxation from her duties in the evening; or at least should not be free to do so without any comment from her West-End sister, who has chosen to sit in judgment upon her. On

the contrary, it seems to me that the hard work, amidst awful suffering and anxious moments—the strain the minds and bodies of the nurses are put to all day—requires and necessitates a thorough change of surroundings and ideas in the evenings. And I think that a healthy-minded person, as a woman who takes up that kind of work requires to be, will, after doing her very best for her patients all the day, not spend her evening in philosophising on the sad, dark sides of life; but, on the contrary, will try to look at the gayer, brighter sides of it, so as to gather fresh strength for fulfilling her duties well on the morrow.

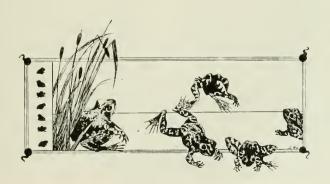
Melancholy views and pessimistic reveries are the luxuries of fashionable ladies: the people whose day is occupied in working in the slums and fever-haunts of London have no time for them. And though to some it may seem wonderful, I know of no human beings, who, though their life is spent amidst the saddest and most hopeless surroundings, are of a happier or more cheerful habit of mind than hospital nurses. Judging from their smiling faces, the healthy lively interest they take in everything, their keen sense of enjoyment, and their appreciation of any kind of amusement and pleasure, you might imagine them to be school children out for a holiday. They are very different from their West-End sisters. They are not blasées—they are

perfectly natural; and their manners are, I think, from a Christian point of view, a great deal better than those of very many of the first ladies of fashion.

Perhaps this is because the horizon of their world is larger, and their "set" includes not merely a select few, but half of London; and perhaps, too, their better knowledge of life and closer contact with its extremities has taught them that there is so much misery and pain on the earth already, that any existing sunshine of happiness must not be darkened by even the shadow of an unkind act or look. And, above all, it is certain that hard work, untiring patience, and ceaseless energy in a good cause must contribute to elevate and improve human nature, and must strengthen and enhance its best qualities.

But, of course, one need not become a nurse to practise these. For those who really wish to learn, acquire, and bring into practice the qualities that sum up the character of a good woman, life is a great school from the beginning to the very end, and in whatever circumstances they may have been placed.

And for those who have not a serious and conscientious conception of these duties—I don't know where they are to learn them; but, for the sake of the patients, they had, at any rate, better not go into a hospital!



A Caravansarai.

DONE INTO VERSE FROM ADDISON.)



DERVIS travelling in the dreamy Kast, Sought, as the crimson faded from the sky, That welcome shelter both for man and beast, H Caravansarai.

Al nightfall, lighting on a goodly Youn,
to lodging can his patient goze descry
Wherein to spread his rug and lay him down
Gill night's soft shadows fly.

Be slands at last before the Palace gate;
Pone is at band his entrance to deny;
Bere, then, the long-sought rest! The bour is late—
Bere shall be peaceful lie.

Full soon lbc angry quards his slumbers break, Bandle him roughly, raise lbc hue and cry; While be confused, as yet but half-awake, Makes effort to comply.

The thing, aroused by such unscendy ding.

And smiling of the cause, himself draws nigh:

"You deemed, forsooth, this' Palace was' an Jin?

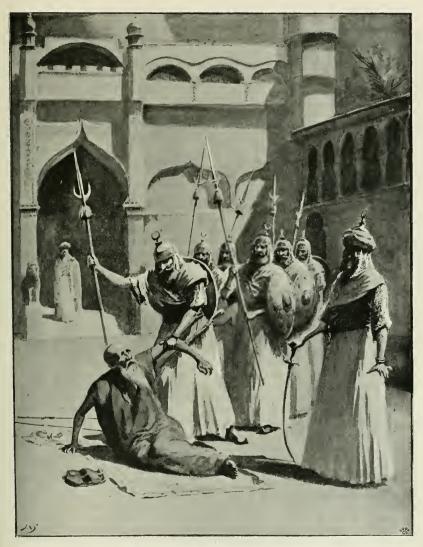
And can you telf me why?"

"Sire," cries the Sage, "who peopled first these halfs? "Who last both dwell beneath their turrels high? "Who now inhabits them? "And what befalls "When he loo comes to die?"

"My ancestors," the King makes answer mild;
"And last my father;"—tears are in his eye:
"I dwell here now; and next—my only child!"

The Dervis hears a sigh.

"The Sire! a house that holds a rassing guest,
One after other, as the years slip by,
Is it a Palace, think you? or at best
H Caravansarai?"



"Full soon the angry guards his slumbers break, Hundle him roughly, raise the hue and cry."

ANIMALS THAT GIVE LIGHT.

By A. W. WILSON.

T is peculiar that the animals which are endowed with the power of emitting light are nearly all of a low type. This fact might be made to bear a moral. Those fortunate beings who are born into the world with such splendid accessories that they are sure to shine, may not, after all, be lofty in the scale of nature. Lord Tennyson, in the "In Memoriam," devotes a section to the same rather commonplace truth, and, indeed, poets and teachers have been fond of dwelling upon it.

What an imitator man is! Whatever he sees done he is sure to try it, and when he succeeds is only too apt to ignore the source whence his hint came. Here is an instance, not without a bearing on our subject:

Fish are strongly attracted by light. Everyone knows that salmon-poaching in old days was largely carried on by men who bore in their hands torches which drew the fish close to them, and then they struck them with a kind of barbed fork called a "lister." In some cases, fishermen, more especially in the East, attach to their nets little glass vessels containing light-giving animals, which brings them all the greater haul; but in many countries this was prohibited, because it led to careless waste of the fish too easily caught. Certain Indian tribes, however, use the same device still; and it has been suggested that the electric light might be used round our coast for the purpose of attracting fish.

It has often been said that man can invent nothing, suggest nothing that nature has not already tried or applied. There are many fishes that proceed on this very principle in securing their prey-lesser fishes. There is an ugly bigmouthed fellow in southern and eastern seas called the angler-fish, or the frog-fish. He lies near the bottom, hiding his big ugly mouth by stirring up the sand round him; then he throws out a kind of short whale-bony fishing-rod, which is rooted at the top of his head, and which has been lying over his back, right in front of him. This has a kind of button or plate at the end of it which wavers, being glancing reddish in colour, with faint light; and the small fry are attracted to it thinking it is a worm, when the angler-fish darts forward and makes a good meal of them. All fishermen who use lights to help them, as boys sometimes do in getting stickle-backs, &c., by aid of phosphorus in a bottle, let down in the dark water, are thus followers of the angler-fish.

Everybody knows the glowworm. It is the typical light-giving insect of our latitude. It is about an inch long, and looks exactly like a brown caterpillar. It is the wingless female of a winged beetle. The shining matter is a greasy-looking stuff, yellowish-white in colour, and is found on the hinder part of the body of the female only. Shelley, the poet, thus made it familiar in one of his fine images:

"Like a glowworm golden In a dell of dew, Scattering unbeholden Its aerial hue

Amid the flowers and grass which screen it from the view."

But the light is more silvery than golden. For long, though various explanations have been given to account for the light-dispensing power, nothing could be felt to be certain. One ingenious set of scientific men said that it was to compensate the female for her plainness in a charming manner of attracting her mate; others said that it was bestowed to scare away bird-enemies, such as the nightingale, who otherwise would devour her. No end of speculation has been indulged in, too, with regard to the substance that gives the light. At one time it was said to be phosphorus; but later research reveals no trace of phosphorus. It does not really burn, that is certain. It is not put out by water, else the night dews which often fall heavily in quarters affected by the glowworm would be apt to put it out. Nor is it capable, so far as is known. of giving forth any heat. It is incapable of communicating ignition to anything. We have often hunted for glowworms in the slopes of the hills near Coldharbour, Dorking, where they abound, and discovered that the light was veryapt to go out just as you were about to put the hand upon them. When we did catch some we put them in pill boxes, with pin-holes in the top, and sometimes they would continue to give out the light for a considerable time.

Recently, a French naturalist of note made some careful observations which almost conclusively

settle the purpose for which these creatures were gifted with light-emitting powers.

He came near to proving that they are used as a means of signalling between individuals of the same species. In order to test this, he enclosed a lightproducing insect in a glass tube, but it emitted no light till some others of the same species approached. Then, to attract their attention, it at once made signals by emitting jets of light in rapid succession. These signals were repeated by the other insects, and they settled on the tube and tried to gain entrance into it. The confined insect ceased to send out light the moment it was assured that it had attracted the attention of the new-comers it wished to come towards it. This was proved by the fact that whenever a new individual was allowed to come near, it renewed its light-signalling. That it was light and not the odour which attracted the insects, the experimentalist proved by shutting up several in a box, provided with small holes, and found that none of their fellows came near.

The fire-fly is about the size of a large bluebottle, with long wings which sheath its sides. It is common in the tropics, but is also found in Northern Italy. The dark-skinned beauties of Brazil, clad in white muslin, dance in the moonlight, their dark hair crowned with a diadem of fire-flies, caught and imprisoned in little bits of gauze. The light of the fire-fly is to him merely a trap. By it the smaller flies are attracted towards the fire-fly, when, like the angler-fish, he darts upon them and makes a meal of them. It should be noticed, however, that while it is the female glowworm which shines, doubtless to attract her mate. it is the male fire-fly which shines to secure himself a good repast. The female fire-fly, oddly enough, is totally unlike her mate, and more resembles the female glowworm, only that she does not shine.

A traveller in the sixteenth century declared that he found tribes which confined these luminous insects, which supplied them with the only light they had in their homes. The Indians used them, made up into necklaces, as guides and signals in times of war. The women converted them into ornaments. The creole women of Havannah, who are hardly more cruel or more vain than beauties elsewhere, made striking ornaments of them by placing them in the folds of their white dresses or in their hair. During a party or a ball, the insects,

they say, grow fatigued, and give out less light, when they get a good shake which makes them bright and serviceable again—just as with some other servants who need to be periodically stirred up. When the party or ball is over the shining insects have their turn of ease and enjoyment. They are treated to a bath before being put into their cages, where a fine supply of cane sugar awaits them. When well fed and refreshed thus, they shine again as brightly as ever.

In Santo Domingo and other West India Islands they are largely employed for lighting purposes, being confined in lanterns, both for going about the country at night and illumination of dwellings. By attaching one of them to each foot while travelling in the darkness of the forests, they serve as guides. One point that may be urged in behalf of these fire-flies is that they kill mosquitoes, finding in the latter their favourite prey. A writer in Science Siftings says that the ancients were probably unacquainted with the species of fire-flies which are so familiar to-day, because the most remarkable of these are peculiar to America. The great lantern flies of Southern Europe and Asia, which are sometimes called "flying glowworms," are allied to the boat flies and water scorpions. On the other hand, the fireflies of the tropics are, as already said, beetles,

When fire-flies are pounded up, we learn that the result is a kind of luminous jelly, salve or ointment, with which the Indians are inclined sometimes to smear their faces, holding that this is a splendid recipe for keeping off mosquitoes and other tormenting insects.

Certainly not among the most attractive of the insects which give light are the so-called "electric centipedes"—black crawlers with many legs. They have been likened to serpents' skeletons in miniature. They move in a snake-like fashion, forward or backward, and leave behind them a bright track of phosphoric light. They are most accustomed, however, to appear in the daytime, when the illumination they afford is not visible—a peculiar and apparently not very economic arrangement of nature.

The "bottle bird"—a native of India and other tropical countries—employs several living lights in a way that indicates high intelligence. It is about the size of a common sparrow, and builds a remarkable nest—a round body, with a long, narrow

neck; in fact, something very like a bottle. Hence its name. This nest hangs neck downwards from the trees. When completed, the bird fastens small pieces of clay at various points round the entrance. Naturalists were long puzzled to find any purpose in this labour. Some thought one thing and some another, but no agreement was come to about it, till at length it was discovered that each of the clay spots, or small balls, really enclosed a lightproducing insect, which, luckily for the birds, live a considerable time thus imprisoned. Further observations served to show that this was done to secure the bird from enemies which abound. Everyone knows that in countries infested by wild beasts no better guarantee for safety from them can be devised than to light a fire and keep it burning all night-a thing which travellers in such regions often resort to.

Most people, at one time or another, when at sea, have noticed at night that the foamy track, made by the quick movement of the vessel, is phosphorescent or shining with light. This is caused by a tiny animal then present in myriads. It is very appropriately named noctiluca, "shining by night." Placed end to end, we read, that about eighty noctiluca go to the inch, or even a few more, so that it is very small. They are in shape like a peach, and the shining is due to some substance under the skin.

But there is a stronger light-giving creature still. He bears the fine scientific name of Pholas dactrlus, and he lives in a thin brittle shell open at both ends. He is about two inches long, and looks very harmless. Yet he is a mighty destroyer, doing what mere strength would find it hard to accomplish. He bores, to form himself a nest, a hole in shape exactly to fit his body, into piers and breakwaters. The hardest stone cannot resist him. Not to speak of wood, granite must give way to his imperious methods. Indeed, the only way to keep him out of timber is to stud it with nails (for he does not like iron), but this defence is not available for breakwaters. And the pholas are luminous. If one of them is preserved in honey for twelve months, and then taken out and placed in warm water, it will emit light just as if recently taken from the sea. They are sometimes eaten like oysters, and if those who have ate them immediately afterwards go into a dark room, their mouths will seem to be phosphorescent. Beccaria, a famous Italian naturalist, made many experiments with them, and found that one *phola* actually made seven ounces, that is, about a large teacupful, of milk so luminous that, when put in a dark room, the faces of those who hung over the vessel could be easily distinguished. So we need not be surprised that the myriads of the *noctiluca* make the sea-water so glowing, that when a boat is being rowed the drops of sea-water falling from the oars gleam for an instant in the eye like diamonds or molten silver.

The "Challenger Expedition," under the late lamented Sir Wyville Thomson, revealed some wonderful facts about the deep-sea life. Up till that time it was supposed that there was no life in the dark depths. Light does not penetrate beyond two hundred fathoms, but fish—peculiar fish—have been dredged up from over 2,750 fathoms.

Nature abhors a vacuum, and is skilful in so modifying habit and organ and functions that everywhere she has her workers. There are no plants in the deepest depths of the sea, so that there the denizens prey much upon each other. The peculiar developments of disguise and defence are almost as wonderful as the abnormal organs for attack, as we might call them, in these deep, dark seacreatures. Some are blind and are armed with wonderful spines; others have not only highly developed and remarkable eyes, but carry a powerful light along with them. They are silvery and pink, in some cases black, with bright scarlet lines -lovely in hue, though there be no human eye to behold them in these dark depths where they disport themselves. One Photichthys, or light-fish, suddenly at will, as is supposed, flashes out from under its keen eye a luminous light, which sheds brightness for a considerable space round it, and brings into view any prey that may be near; and, at will, it can close its lantern or bull's-eye, and lie hidden from many of its enemies. In the genus Scopelus, there are a pair of large lights in the tail; "so that a strong ray shot forth from the sternchaser may dazzle and frighten an enemy." Seaurchins, sea-slugs, and star-fish, and sponges of the utmost beauty, are found in these dark depths, too; and many of them glow with a soft diffused light that pulses and rises and then fades down in perpetual change—not one moment the same. Such wonders the dark, unfathomed floors of ocean bear. What a delight it would be to pay a visit, even for a few moments, to such magic regions, on which eye of man has never looked!



THE ROMANCE OF LONDON.

III.—CITY PAGEANTS.

By EDWIN OLIVER.

THERE is, to most of us, a subtle fascination in public display, although our latterday Culture impels us outwardly to deprecate the frivolities of pageant and festival. These have, in fact, almost disappeared before the chilling disapproval of the Superior Person. There is no place now for Robin Hood and his morris dancers, for the Lord of Misrule or the bonfires of St. John. It is true that even we, of the coming generation, can recall the praiseworthy, if mercenary, attempts of a few misguided sweeps to prolong the pretty May-day fictions; but the last of these hardy anachronisms have, at length, felt the folly of their struggle with the New Learning, and decorously departed. Yet (though tell it not in Gath), we still feel, deep down, a guilty thrill at sound of the drum and the clatter of hoofs, as the guards pass by, in red and gold and nodding plumes. Our sense of colour involuntarily rests upon the sheriffs' coaches and the streaming bunting. Even the crude familiarities of the piano-organ can make our æsthetic blood flow quicker, and our step more elate. It is a weakness, doubtless, but let us cherish it, if only for the sake of contrast,

There is left, it is true, the annual celebration of November 9th, but it has as little relation to the ancient pageant as a castellated villa to a feudal fortress, or a modern counter-jumper to the hotheaded prentice of Chepe. It may still have the good moral influence which Cobbett claims for it, when he says: "Our Lord Mayor, and his golden coach, and his gold-covered footmen and coachmen, and his golden chain and his chaplain, and his great sword of State, please the people, and particularly the women and girls; and when they are pleased, the men and boys are pleased. And many a young fellow has been more industrious and attentive from his hope of one day riding in that golden coach."

But it is no more the "Show" of yore than the present worthy magistrate is a Walworth, a Whittington, or a Gresham. Then these proud magnates were meet for princes; they gamed with emperors, and jested with kings; in times of taxation they were rated with Earls. Did not Whittington himself, when he feasted the Fifth Henry and his Valois bride, burn before the monarch's eyes the royal bonds for £60,000! "Never," cried the delighted guest, "had King such a servant." "And never," replied the courtly trader, "had servant such a King."

London was, indeed, a city of gorgeous display,



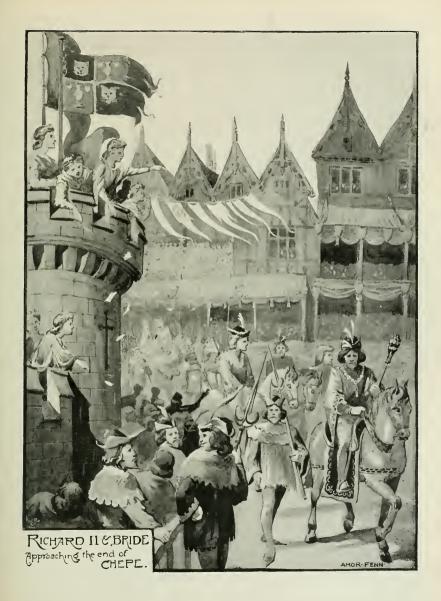
such as our sombre tastes can scarcely realise. No public occasion was deemed too trivial for one of these splendid pageants. Did royalty ride to or from the Tower; did some foreign potentate dine at the Guildhall; was a Mayor elected or a prince born—the houses blazed with tapestries and gold brocades, flags and pennons canopied the streets, bells pealed, the conduits ran with wine, poets cudgelled their brains for quaint device and sumptuous masque. It vied with the cities of the East, it eclipsed Venice in her prime for wealth of colour, for prodigality of design.

Thus says a contemporary: "Search all chronicles, all histories and records, in what language or letter soever, there is no subject received into the place of his government with the like style and magnificence as is the Lord Mayor of the City of London."

When Richard II, showed his young Bohemian bride to the citizens, what gay doings there were! One end of Chepe became a huge wooden castle, with frowning towers, from the sides of which flowed streams of red wine. On the battlements a bevy of young girls awaited the royal pair, and, as they passed, blew gold leaf upon the cavalcade, "so that the air seemed filled with golden butterflies." The ground was carpeted with the rain of imitation gold coins, which were flung before the horse's

feet. Again, when this same arbitrary young King found it politic to make his peace with the Metropolis, the fountains near the Great Conduit ran wine, from which Richard and his Queen drank in goblets of gold, while a flying angel descended from a cloud to present them each with a golden circlet.

When Eleanor of Provence passed through, in 1236, to her coronation at Westminster, a very brave show was made. Three hundred and sixty of the principal citizens, arrayed in long robes of gold, and multi-coloured silks, rode forward on gaudily-trapped horses to meet her, each bearing in his hand a cup of gold or silver. The royal trumpeters walked before, to blazon forth the approach of this distinguished cortège, whose privilege it was on this occasion to act as Bottlers to the King himself. When Edward I. returned from his Scottish victories, the various guilds strove gallantly to outdo each other; but the palm rested with the Fishmongers, whose procession could boast of four huge gilt sturgeons, and four



salmon in silver, borne on a horse apiece. These were followed by forty-six knights in full armour, and mounted on steeds "made like luces of the sea." The day being dedicated to St. Magnus, his representative followed, attended by a thousand horsemen.

To give a fuller picture of these mediaval pageants, before passing on to the greater glories of the Elizabethan, we may instance the thanksgiving day for the victory of Agincourt. It was a great occasion. John Bull had soundly drubbed his enemy, and, of course, must make merry over it, though his back was bent with crushing levies, though his purse was lean, and his liberties fast waning. The Mayor and all his officers, clad in gorgeous scarlet, and attended by four hundred richly-dressed commoners on horseback, met the King at Blackheath. They found Henry meek, and little inclined for display. All the glory must be for the Almighty; not his mortal hand had wasted the fair fields of France. Not even his

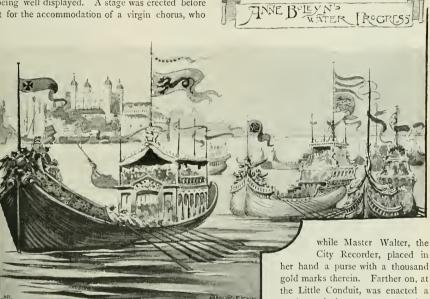
famous helm, cleft by Alencon's sword, must be shown to the gaping crowd, London Bridge welcomed him with royal banners and a huge inscription, "Civitas Regis Justicia." On the tower stood two great figures, male and female, the former holding in one hand an axe, and in the other the keys of the City. At either side of the drawbridge rose lofty columns, in imitation marble and green jasper, on the summits of which were representations of the King's beaststhe lion and the antelope. Crossing the bridge, they came to another tower of sham marble, where, in a pavilion of crimson tapestry, was an armoured figure of St. George, wearing a richly-gemmed laurel crown. From his left hand flowed a scroll, bearing the legend, "Soli Deo Honor et Gloria," A burst of song greeted them from a neighbouring building, where boy-angels, with shimmering wings, piped the anthem, "Our King went forth to Normandy."

The conduits were very gay. That on Cornhill bore the arms of the King, St. George, Edward, and Edmund. Within a crimson tent a band of white-bearded seers, in golden raiment, hailed their sovereign with a great flight of small birds, which flew round him, and lighted on his shoulders. This was emblematic of a sacrifice to God, and was accom-

panied by the psalm, Cantate Domino. At the Cheapside Conduit, which was draped in green, were the twelve Apostles, their respective names appearing on their foreheads. With them were England's twelve Kings, Martyrs, and Confessors. Their salutation took the form of a shower of silver leaves, while the pipes ran wine, the allusion being to the meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek after the conquest of the Four Kings. An elegant wooden castle, marble and jasper, covered the Cross, the various royal arms being well displayed. A stage was erected before it for the accommodation of a virgin chorus, who

an opportunity of blowing gold leaves upon the unfortunate monarch. How thankful he must have been to reach the seclusion of Westminster!

Poor Anne Boleyn has the honour of figuring in the first Lord Mayor's Show which the old chroniclers have described in detail. On the eve of her coronation, she proceeded from the Tower to Westminster, by way of Cheapside, where the conduits ran with red and white wine. At the Cross awaited all the city dignities to do homage.



hailed the new David with dance and timbrel. The heavenly host, in the shape of numerous small boys, occupied the structure itself, whose office it was to sing the Te Deum, and pelt the King with little imitation gold coins and laurel sprigs. The pageant came to a close at the Western Conduit, above the tower of which was a canopy of sky and cloud, surmounted by a golden archangel, and supported by minor angels. Within were more angelic beings, grouped about a throne, where sat a brilliant image of the Sun. Around were placed pavilions, to give young girls

City Recorder, placed in her hand a purse with a thousand gold marks therein. Farther on, at the Little Conduit, was enacted a costly musical pageant, representing the goddesses Juno, Venus, and

Minerva. These ladies gracefully bestowed on the future Oneen a golden apple, divided into three sections, symbolical of Wealth, Wisdom, and Happiness. The next day commenced with a grand water procession, which escorted Anne from Greenwich to Westminster. There were over fifty barges, belonging to the City companies. The Mayor's barge took the lead, clad in red cloth, it being a royal function. The sides were draped with emblazoned targets, the deck and sails with rich cloth of gold and silver. On board were "shawms, shagbushes, and divers other instruments, which



continually made goodly harmony." At the head and stern, the royal arms were beaten in gold on two huge banners; while everywhere floated the flags of the Haberdashers and Merchant Adventurers' Guilds, to which Sir Stephen Peacock belonged. On the left hand of this barge was another craft, on which was presented a pageant displaying a golden rock, surrounded with red and white roses, on which was crowned a white falcon, this being the young Oueen's device: on the slopes reclined maidens, "singing and playing sweetly." On the right-hand side was the Bachelor's barge, which also discoursed sweet music, and in front a truly awful monster, symbolical of the Tudor Rouge Dragon, was borne along, together with many other terrifying beasts and velling savages, who vomited fire, let off squibs, and made "hideous noises." So the unfortunate Queen passed to her brief, ill-gotten triumph.

The dramatic spirit of the Elizabethan age took full advantage of the Pageant. It was the precursor of its greater sister, the Play. As the histrionic element developed, the disconnected grouping of the earlier shows gained sequence and coherence. A definite scheme of action became inadmissible, and when the limits of the pageant were found inadequate, the theatre superseded it. Nothing is more characteristic of the time than this outburst of theatrical display. The nation was stage-struck; the kingdom one great playhouse. People were feeding on miracles. The marvels of the Western world were firing men's blood; the splendours of the gorgeous East were retailed in every tavern. Is it strange that the moral balance was lost, and that something gayer than the humdrum of daily life was sought? These shows were everywhere; the Queen herself was made the centre of a continuous pageant. Nymphs awaited her in the forest glades when she followed the chase; Cupids received her at the city gates as she passed from town to town. Of the Court pageants Ben Jonson himself, whose masques were a feature of them, may best speak. "Such," says he, "was the exquisite performance, as, besides the pomp, splendour, or what we may call apparelling, of such presentments, that alone, had all else been absent, was of power to surprise with delight, and steal away the spectators from themselves. Nor was there wanting whatsoever might give to the furniture or complement, either in riches, or strangeness of the habits, delicacy of dances, magnificence of the scene, or divine rapture of musick. Only the envy was that it lasted not still."

It was a great occasion when the young Oueen passed through the city on the day before her coronation. She was radiant then with young life, young hopes, and the new sense of power, A smile lit up her face as one of the crowd said, "I remember old King Harry the Eighth." The citizens gave her no half-hearted reception; the streets were en fête. In Gracechurch Street there was a grand arch, beneath which were three tiers. with a tableau on each. On the first, a child represented Elizabeth herself; on the second were two more youngsters as her father and Anne Boleyn; and on the lowest stage came Henry VII. and Elizabeth of York. There was another figure of the Oueen in Cornhill, attended by Religion, Love, Justice, and Wisdom, who were contending with their opposites. Cheapside was a blaze of colour, the streets being draped with cloth of gold and costly stuffs and carpets; banners and streamers floated from the houses. All the way from Fenchurch Street to the Little Conduit the Companies were ranged in rows behind barriers of cloth. A third pageant, of the eight beatitudes, met her at the upper end, and here the Recorder handed her the City's gift of a crimson satin purse, containing a thousand marks. The royal condescension was never better shown than in the alacrity with which she accepted this token. Further on, by the Conduit, a very ambitious design awaited her. On either side of a cavern rose two hills in strong contrast, the one barren and desolate, with a solitary figure resting beneath a leafless tree, on which was displayed the sign, "Respublica Ruinosa"; the other verdant with grass and foliage, and described as "Respublica Instituta." The old man with the scythe excited the Queen's curiosity; when told it was Time, she replied, "Yes, and Time has brought me here." Noticing that Truth, a maiden in white silk, held a Bible in her hand, she turned to Sir John Perrot, who was holding her canopy, and bade him bring her the book. But, being told that this was contrary to the play, she permitted it to be lowered into her chariot by a golden thread. She then hugged and kissed the volume, declaring that it was the most precious gift she had received, and that she would



read it diligently, "to the great comfort of the bystanders." Four towers had been erected on a stage at the Fleet Street Conduit, where, beneath a palm-tree, was enthroned Deborah, "Judge and Restorer of the House of Israel." Representatives of the clergy, nobility, and Commons occupied the steps of the throne. The City Function ended at Temple Bar, which was guarded by Gogmagog the Albion, and Corineus the Briton. A child, in the garb of a poet, stepped out from a band of youthful singers, to deliver the farewell; and then the Queen passed on to Westminster.

In no way behind the royal pageants were the purely civic shows which commemorated the election of new officers They were taken seriously then, and were events requiring elaborate thought and design, and the expenditure of a fortune to carry out. The reigning monarch was a frequent guest; a thousand persons would sit down to the banquet, the cost of which would amount to four hundred pounds, a large sum for the sixteenth century. Perhaps the most noticeable show of this period was that celebrating the election of John Leman, fishmonger, to the chief office in the year 1616. The conception of this pageant was in the brain of Anthony Munday, dramatist, and collaborator with Drayton; the designs are still preserved by the Fishmongers' Company. It consisted of six special groups mainly bearing a piscatorial significance. First came a Dutch fishing-boat on wheels, the occupants of which were continually hauling in their fish-laden nets, and scattering the contents among the crowd. This was followed by an enormous dolphin wearing a crown and bestrode by Arion. Next came a delicate compliment to the brother Company of Goldsmiths, depicting the Moorish king on a golden leopard, giving freely of his wealth as he passed. In attendance were six tributary kings on horseback, clad in armour of golden sheen, and weighted with ingots. Fourthly, there was the customary play upon the name and escutcheon of the new mayor, this time a goodly lemon tree, rich with fruit, in which a nested pelican was feeding her offspring. Higher up among the branches were children emblematic of the five senses-sight as an eagle, hearing as a hart, taste as an ape, smell as a dog, and touch as a spider. The fifth car paid homage to the illustrious dead who had risen to the chief City honour by the conscientious sale of fish; their shields were ranged

round the bower of Sir William Walworth, most noble of fishmongers. Within was a mailed effigy of the knight himself, while upon a dagger's point a mounted soldier carried the head of the great rebel, Wat Tyler. For escort there were five knights on horseback, six trumpeters, and two dozen halberdiers in pale blue silk with the arms of the guild on the front and those of Sir William on the back. There was also a golden-winged angel on a gay steed, whose part it was to rouse Walworth from his slumbers, when the Lord Mayor approached, and assist him in the delivery of the interlude. But these were only accessories to the great triumphal car, to which mermen and mermaids were harnessed. On a throne sat King Richard II., who, by his connection with Walworth, of course shed a reflected halo on fish; above, a guardian angel watched over the safety of the crown, and beneath were a few of the leading virtues. These were represented by fair damsels who were engaged in abusing Treason and Rebellion, the last two being represented by "burly men." Opposite to the king was Justice attended by Law, Authority, Peace, Plenty, Vigilance, and Discipline.

But, perhaps, the most characteristic of these great shows, because less artificial, were the wonderful Midsummer Marching Watches, of which Stow gives such glowing pictures. On the vigils of St. John the Baptist and of St. Peter and St. Paul. every door was hung with fragrant festoons of green birch, long fennel, St. John's Wort, orpin, and white lilies, and illuminated with oil-lamps. The more ambitious displayed curiously wrought branches of iron, containing sometimes as many as a hundred lights. Everybody contributed towards the bonfires along the streets, these being supposed not only to purge the infected air, but also to cement all breaches of friendship. The richer citizens provided tables outside their doors, whereon were set such dainties as sweetbread, meat, and drink, of which all comers were invited to partake. Then came the Marching Watch of some two thousand men, "part of them being old soldiers of skill to be captains, lieutenants, sergeants, corporals, &c.; whifflers, drummers, and fifes, standard and ensign bearers, demi-launces on great horses, gunners with hand-guns or half-hakes, archers in coats of white fustian signed on the breast and back with the arms of the city, their bows bent in their hands, with sheafs of arrows by their side; pike-



Hall, to Aldgate; then back down Fenchurch Street, by Grasse Church, about Grasse Church Conduit, and up Grasse Church Street into Cornhill, and through into Westcheap again." In the year 1539, this Marching reached such

pretensions as to cause the intervention of the Crown. Fifteen thousand citizens, clothed in white silk and chains of gold, gathered together "at the Miles End." They marched through the City to Westminster, around St. James's Park, and back by Holborn. "King Henry, then considering the great charges of the citizens for the furniture of this unusual muster, forbade the Marching Watch provided for at Midsummer for that year; which, being once laid down, was not raised again till the year 1548."

WOOD-VIOLET: A MEMORY.

By RACHEL S. MACNAMARA.

THE Cynic leant against the conservatory-door, moodily watching the dancers as they whirled past. He felt out of touch with his surroundings. What had he in common with all these merry fools?

The room was hot—the air was heavy with flowers and perfume—one of the violins in the band was slightly out of tune, and it jarred upon his sensitive ear.

Just then Lady Beatrice floated past. She paused near him for a second, radiant in white satin, and redolent of violets.

"So after all," she said, half saucily, half wistfully, "boredom is your reward for coming here to-night."

A cynical reply was on his lips, but before he had time to utter it, she was gone.

A bunch of violets had fallen where she stood. He picked it up absently, but, as the subtle scent permeated his senses, a quiver of pain shot across his face, and the lips which had a moment ago curved in sarcasm, now trembled to a far stronger emotion. Memory lifted a corner of her veil, and bade him look back on the days of youth, when life still held an ideal or two, and cynicism was an unknown quantity.

He still stood by the door, holding the drooping flowers in his hand; but the ballroom, and all its surroundings had faded away, and this is what he saw instead.

A still autumn evening in a wood. Trees with straight or knotted trunks, and swift-dropping russet leaves; a blackbird fluting in the hazel-bushes; a thrush replying from an elm; and a young man, with the fire of youth and desire in his dark eyes, sauntering along the leaf-strewn path.

"How good life is!" he says. "There is my little violet-gatherer!"

The girl has almost reached him now. Her basket, with its fragrant burden, hangs upon her arm. Her hood has fallen back, disclosing a sweet face framed in dark hair, and grey eyes with white lids and dusky fringes.

"Good evening, Wood-violet," he says, joyously.
"Have you come out to hear the throstles sing?"

"I have come out to gather violets, you know," she says, shyly. "I hope to have a good harvest for to-morrow's market."

"What a poetical occupation! I cannot imagine you as doing anything but flitting through the wood and plucking violets. It just suits you."

"Cannot you imagine me spinning, baking, cooking, or feeding fowls? To say nothing of sweeping or dusting?" she returns. "Life is not all poetry and flower-gathering, Mr. Feverel."

"Did you not say you would call me Dennis?" cries he, reproachfully. "You promised, 'Woodviolet'"

"Why do you call me 'Wood-violet'?" she says. "My name is Katherine."

"What does it matter? I have always thought of you as 'Wood-violet,' and I shall not begin to call you anything else now. It is your eyes, I think. Like your namesake, Catarina's, they are the 'sweetest eyes were ever seen.'"

"Hush! You mustn't say such things——" Then, as a whistle sounded down the tree-aisles, "There is my aunt. I must go."

"How dare she whistle for you, as if you were a dog? Do stay a little longer. No? Then when shall we meet again?"

"I don't know. My aunt-"

"Heaven consign your aunt to the Furies! Such an ugly aunt, too! The embodiment of all the obnoxious virtues!"

Her hand still lingers in his, but now she breaks away. He sees that the violet eyes are brimming with tears.

"How can you? She is so good!" she cries; and, turning, speeds away through the trees.

He has for so long been clever at other people's expense that the possibility of his epigrams wound-

ing has never occurred to him. He wonders how he has hurt her-dear little tender-hearted thing.

For two long days he haunts the wood, but in vain.

The third day he meets her, wandering alone. "Wood-violet! What is it?" he cries. me. I love you, dearest."

"I never knew that she was ugly," she says, with a break in her voice. "I don't mind, really; but I thought she was beautiful. You have taken something from me. You showed me she was ugly."

"What does it matter, if she is good to you?" he says. "Forgive me, sweetheart. If you knew how I love you," and he kisses away her tears.

The scene changes.

It is a hot July day in London, and in a close little sitting-room Katherine waits for her husband

Transplantation to the city has not agreed with this delicate wood-blossom. The violet eyes are larger and more wistful-the white-rose cheeks a shade whiter.

A step comes up the stairs, and her face lights up as she hears it.

Dennis enters.

"Tired, sweetheart?" he says, kissing her.

"Not so very. It is hot though, dearest."

"Hot? insufferable! But you are pale, sweetheart. My Wood-violet is a very white violet to-day. It is the heat. You will be better when the cool weather comes."

"When the summer is over," she says bravely, feeling a dim foreboding which she must not put into words.

"Oh, it is beautiful to be so happy!" she cries, suddenly, and the tears come into her eyes.

The shadow falls on him, too.

"Would you like to come back to the wood? You are drooping in the heat here, my treasure."

"No, no. You mustn't leave your work. Where you are, I am happiest."

" My Wood-violet!"

"You have got my violets, I see," said Lady Beatrice, half hoping he would keep them.

The Cynic turned a cruelly startled face towards

How was she to know that on his heart was pressing heavily a little white marble cross.



UNFORGETFULNESS.

H! chide not these fond tears that flow For one lost vesterday: Nor tell me that December's snow Will change to flowers of May.

The broken bough in winter-time Doth every leaf retain, No more, like others, at the prime To bud and bloom again.

Thus broken, in my constant mind To dead delights I cling; No other joys my heart may find, May see no second Spring!

F. D. LITTLE



By E. CARTER.

PLEASANT memory sometimes comes to refresh my weary soul in this great city. It is of a heather-clad hill, where I once stood to watch the sun lulled to rest in his gorgeous couch of crimson and gold by the vesper hum of nivriads of bees which were bent on rifling the tiny heather bells of all their wealth before the last ray had disappeared. Too intent were they to pay any attention to an insignificant piece of humanity till they bumped unceremoniously against me, then picked themselves up with a surprised air, and resumed their flight to their respective nests, their golden booty tucked snugly away, and doubtless promising themselves an early breakfast next morning should the weather prove propitious; for a bee abominates an east wind as much as any rheumatic old gentleman, and will not venture out unless obliged by a very empty larder. They have an equally strong antipathy to rain, though they do not object to build their nests near water, and indeed I have heard that they hold similar principles to our suburban milkman, and, in dry seasons only, of course, add a suspicion of water to the honey.

The Mason bee (Megachile) frequents clay banks on the river margin to obtain material for her building. She kneads up a pellet of moist clay as large as a garden pea, and carries it often a considerable distance to her nest (no light labour, as several hundred pellets are required to complete a nest), in which there are several cells the size and shape of a lady's thimble, the interiors being finely polished. In each of these the bee deposits a lump of pollen mixed with honey into a sort of pudding, and an egg, which, in time, becomes a grub that eats it all, and then spins itself into a cocoon and

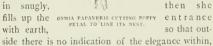
awaits further developments. The entrance to the nest is guarded by a lump of mud which looks as if it had been carelessly thrown from the neighbouring cart-rut, but if we examine it carefully, we shall find it contains more tiny stones than the mud in the rut, and has a perforation which is an entrance to the cells. These bees are only solitary in undertaking the entire responsibility of their own nest and young, they do not object to neighbours, and many will quarry together in the same hole for clay, and build their holes in the same piece of wall, living honest and industrious lives. But now and then a ne'er-do-weel turns up who gets tired of work and takes possession of a neighbour's house. Naturally, when the rightful owner appears, there is a battle royal, in which, I grieve to say, might and not always right prevails.

Megachile centuncularis, or rose-leaf cutter, is a most ingenious little upholsterer, who makes a cylindrical tunnel in a beaten path or old wall from six to ten inches deep. This she divides into cells with green tapestry, cut from the leaves of the neighbouring rose-bush with her mandibles. The first piece is an accurate oval to form the base of the cavity; the others, circular, are fitted together with great care, without paste or glue: she trusts to the spring of the leaf to keep its position, nine or ten pieces being used to complete a cell, as seen in the illustration. A nest of this bee has been found containing thirty of these cells, in which at least one thousand pieces of leaf had been used by one insect.

The first cell complete, she collects pollen and honey chiefly from thistles, which form a most appetising conserve for the future grub; the egg is then laid and covered in with another piece of leaf, and a second cell started.

The poppy bee (Osmia papareris) is another of the same trade, but she has an eye for colour, and loves to deck her walls with the gorgeous scarlet try to cut a fresh poppy petals. If we

poppy petal, it shriin all direcshe can do rate curves on her walls as glass. sparing of ing it beentrance, so she has her egg and may have fold over



nothing to attract enemies bent on

vels and crinkles tions; but it in accuand lay it as smooth She is not it, prolongyond the that when deposited its food, she plenty to

and tuck it then she entrance so that out-

is clear. And bees which excavate their nests, as the carpenter bees (Xylocopa), in wood, carry each chip some distance before dropping it, so that a



ROSE-LEAF CUTTER BEE WITH NEST.

house. There is a beautiful violet-winged carpenter

bee found on the Continent which stores the sawdust she cuts out, and makes it up into a cement for the

> partitions between her cells, instead of the clay used by our British species.

The little Ceratina albilabris selects a broken branch of bramble, wild

rose, syringaorany soft, pithy shrub, her mandibles not being strong enough to gnaw through the outer bark. She makes her perforation

plunder; and there are a good many always on the watch, such as ants who eat the food, the ichneumon fly, which lays its eggsinthe body of the larvæ. Thus the bee takes many precautions, If watched. she shows no fear while out on her foraging journeys for honey or building materials, but on returning to her nest, if you are

suspiciously near, or if she perceives any insect depredator, she will make a wide circuit.

pretend to be only resting in the sun, pruning her wings or greatly interested in some crevices at some distance from her nest, then dart off in an opposite direction, returning another way to see if the coast

about a foot long, divides it into from 8 to 12 cells, and besides an earth or clay division, she stretches a silk covering over each end of her cells as tight as a drumhead. Her young take about two months to pass through their transformations of egg, larva and chrysalis, and, as a fully-developed bee, lives through the winter in some sheltered nook, till spring rouses it from its torpor to fulfil the domestic duties of its life.



NEST OF CERATINA.

Andrenæ, or mining bees, dig six to eight inches into the ground, a smooth circular gallery terminating in a thimble-shaped chamber at nearly right angles to the entrance, in which the cells are placed. They are the first abroad in the spring. The early flowers, as catkins, etc., have very shallow corollas. This bee is only provided with a very short tongue, a matter in which different kinds of bees vary very much, and is of great importance in the work of fertilising flowers. The humble bee is our longest-tongued variety, and the only one able to reach the honey of the red clover: on account of its long tubular form, no other insect can be found to fertilise it. The Australians used to buy all fresh seed from Europe till Darwin suggested the necessity of importing the humble bee.

Bombus terrestris varies very much in size, but is generally big and gay in her furry coat of brilliant amber, now blue, now browny black, according to the light she catches. Though occasionally found in the tropics, her home is the north; she hums her sympathetic song to the exiles in Siberia, and to the explorer within the Arctic circle as high as Boothia Felix, or more northerly than the seventieth parallel, as well as to us Britons.

She is only solitary in the spring, when she wakes from her long sleep under the moss or leaves, and sets forth like a pioneer, as she is, to found a colony. If a suitable hole or burrow is not to be found, she digs one for herself, collects a mass of pollen and honey, in a cavity of which she deposits from seven to fourteen eggs. She has no time to indulge them in separate cells, for she

wants them hatched as quickly as possible to help her. As soon as the larvae are capable of motion. they push their way in various directions, eating as they move; when they have attained their full size, they surround themselves with a silken wall, which the mother strengthens with a thin layer of wax. thus forming a cell in which they lie till fully developed, when they eat their way out and assume their duties to their brothers and sisters. For while they were growing their mother has been adding to the pollen mass and laying eggs; but now she has help, she confines herself to home duties, leaving the vounger members to forage for supplies. The first broods are always workers. Later in the summer the males appear, and eggs laid after July produce large queens similar to the foundress, and these are the only ones which live when the cold weather comes.

Bees have several varieties of poor relations who either cannot or will not work, and live on the industry of their fellows. One of these parasites, Apathus, resembles the Bombus, in whose nest it is brought up, so closely that it is not



tibia and hairs of thick hair on the

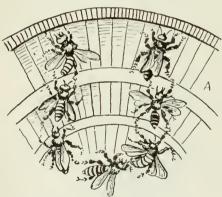
the Bombus, or abdomen, as in

other species. The Apathus comes out about the same time as the maternal Bombi, and waits till that exemplary matron has provided a home and a good supply of food to lay her eggs, thus securing provision for her progeny without any personal

MASON BEE.

trouble. She has two broods in the year, but the chief hatching time is the autumn, when the largest number come out to enjoy a brief honeymoon among the thistle blooms, where they are very liable to be pounced upon by water wagtails, who love to snatch a toothsome morsel from among these buzzing honey-mooners.

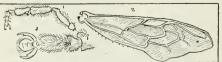
The Bombus muscorum, or carder bee, is similar in habits to the Bombus terrestris, a single female starting the nest in a hole in the ground; but she covers it with a dome of dry moss or grass which she transports to her nest by a series of backward pushes. If later on there are more workers, they stand in a line, their backs to the nest—the first with her forelegs into a bundle and pushes it under her body to the next bee, and so on till it reaches



A FESTOON OF BEES ENGAGED IN WAX-MAKING.

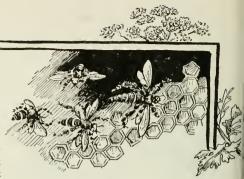
the entrance, a covered way, sometimes a foot long and half an inch wide, which opens into the bottom of the nest. Besides the moss and grass, they often make a ceiling of coarse wax to keep out the rain.

Their young are peculiar in not being able to escape from their cocoons without the aid of the old bees, who gnaw off the covering at the right



1. Hind leg of worker, showing pollen basket.

2. Wing of worker.
3. End of leg much magnified.



QUEEN WITH HER ATTENDANTS INSPECTING CELLS BEFORE LAYING EGGS.

moment; as is the custom with ants, the cells are then repaired with a rim round the edge and used as honey-pots.

The Bombus lapidaria, or orange-tailed bee, is not nearly so peacefully inclined. It builds in stony ground or in heaps of stones, lines its nest neatly with moss, and gathers honey most industriously, but is of a more warlike disposition than other bees, and its sting is more painful. These bees



DRONE HIDING FROM HIS PURSUERS DURING A GENERAL MASSACRE.

appear to keep a standing army ready to emerge at a moment's notice, to do battle with any rash intruder, who generally beats a hasty and ignominious retreat, pursued quite off the premises by the indignant little warriors.



By MRS. PARR.

CHAPTER I.

T was the year 1714.
The sixth of February,

"Good Queen Anne's birthday, All bells ringing gay,"

was past—the last birthday this well-beloved sovereign of the English people was to see upon earth.

Robbed by death of all those who were dear to her; her ambitions blasted; her affections blighted; the unhappy woman, surrounded by spies, sycophants, and time-serving courtiers, was in turn overwhelmed by the duty she owed to her Protestant subjects, by her remorse for her unfilial behaviour to her father, and by the stain she had cast on the birthright of her brother. Acting from these impulses, she seemed to vere from side to side, alternately holding the torch of hope to each of the contending parties. At one time the confidence of the Jacobites was set high by the rumour that Anne had been seen to kiss and weep over her brother's portrait. She had listened with marked complacency to a conversation between Lady Winchelsea and Lady Jersey respecting the handsome presence of the Prince, whom she studiously called brother; looking frowning and askant on such as named him Chevalier, or by that traitorous word Pretender. And in the very midst of this, a crow would come from the Hanoverians. The Queen had written a conciliatory letter to the Elector, styling him her "Beloved Cousin George." She had proposed that an invitation should be sent for him to take his place as Duke of Cambridge in the House of Lords. She had set the sum of £5,000 on the head of James Stuart, assuming to call himself James the Third of England.

Not only in London did this wave of factions run high; the struggle was equally fierce in all the large towns of the Kingdom. To avoid it, we must seek far hamlets and villages, far from the world's din, whose rustic population took their politics from the great man of the place, and were Whigs or Tories according to the land they lived upon. So long as crops were heavy, harvests good, and beeves thriving, what mattered it to them whether King James or King George wore the Crown. News took long to travel, things seemed often on the change, and while what meant right to-day might mean wrong to-morrow, it was safer for humble folk to leave politics to their betters; and, unless chance sent any traveller that way, or when any of my lord's followers came from town, to be content with local gossip, in which each one present could have his say.

The small company assembled at the "Downham Arms," in the little village of Nanton, was in the midst of one of these interesting local discussions when its bucolic equanimity was disturbed by the unexpected appearance of Mr. Merton, my lord's own gentleman, who had come clattering through the village street as if a regiment of troopers were riding after him. Very important and mysterious did this awe-inspiring personage look, as, yielding to the host's entreaty that he would spare a moment to sip a dram, he stood inside the low room of the little inn with the eyes of all present fixed upon him, as naturally they should be, considering he had come all the way straight from London town, then-though but a distance of forty miles divided them-further removed from Nanton than now if a thousand miles lav between.

The quiet village, hidden away amid cherry orchards and hop gardens, had no claim to distinction except that at its far end, on top of the hill which rises there, stood Nanton Priors, the seat of the Earl of Downham. The Priors had belonged to the Downhams since "bluff King

Hal" had turned out the monks from there. Barons of Downham they had been then, and so remained until the recent wars, when the present lord, who had succeeded his uncle, was, through the great Duke's interest, made an Earl. In honour of the occasion the Nanton folk set the bells ringing, burnt bonfires, and danced on the green; though what reason they had for rejoicing no one could exactly say. Their lord seldom came near them, or if he did, it was only to see where timber could be cut; how money could be raised to squander away on his town pleasures. But though the Earl spent his time in London, Nanton Priors was not quite deserted. Madam, my lord's mother, lived there; and there, too, in former days lived Lord Downham's two daughters-fine handsome girls, who had but to go through one year at Court before they both got husbands. There was still one daughter left, but small expectations were raised on her account, for poor Lady Sarah had no handsome face to stand her in stead of the fortune which her spendthrift father had long since gambled away. The village gossips sighed and shook their heads, saying 'twas a sorry matter that Lady Sarah lacked her sisters' good looks, for old Madam grew more crabbed every day she lived, and it was more than enough to turn the poor young thing to vinegar to be shut up day in and day out with such a dragon as Madam was known to be.

While we have been digressing from our story, Master Merton had finished his Hollands, had set the company further gaping by the important air with which he whispered one or two "nothings" into the landlord's ear, and then shaking hands with Simon Watling, and throwing a farewell gesture to the rest of the company, the great man's great man took his departure, and for a few minutes there was silence in the room.

"Only came down to-day, and off at cock-crow to-morrow! What could the meaning be?"

It was a question each one asked himself, then turned to his fellow for the answer.

No thought of Queen, Elector, Pretender agitated their minds, all interest was merged in curiosity to find out what was the matter "at Priors."

No letter had gone there, that John Partridge could vouch for; and Will Warly, who had been up there all day helping with repairs to some furniture, was certain there was no thought of Master Merton being expected down. What could it be?

"Happen it may turn out that my lord has

chosen another lady," Drake, the new church clerk, ventured to say.

But Simon Watling shook his head, and old Hugh, the blacksmith, with a laugh that showed the speaker his ignorance, answered: "Nay, man, nay. If that were so, old Madam is the last one my lord would send for to grace his wedding feast; for, as I took it, Master Merton has come down to fetch somebody who will go back with him, and that they start to-morrow at break of day."

"And that somebody must be Madam. Who else is there to go?" and Simon scratched his stubble head in perplexity.

"Well, well," he added, "doubtless I shall hear more. Master Merton may run down again. He's very friendly where he takes; but that's not to every one."

"If what he says about the taxing comes true, grain will run scarce," put in Tickle, the principal farmer; and this being a topic each one could join in, the talking became general, and Simon could slip away to get out a certain stone jar, so that, should his friend Merton drop in, he would have something at hand to give to him.

But Merton had no thought of returning, being far too engrossed by the mystery of his mission, which was as great an enigma to him as to those he had come to tell it to. His one consolation was in picturing the wrath of old Madam when she heard his startling communication, and the rage the terrible old lady would put herself in, at being desired to do anything, about the why and wherefore of which she was not informed. Merton positively chuckled over the picture he drew of Madam, flouting about in her brown brocaded sacque-a time-honoured garment, which had seen service in four reigns-shaking at him the large Spanish fan which she carried, ready to bring it sharply rapping down on all idle offenders, whose ears had not caught sound of the tippety-tap of her silver-headed cane, or the click-clack of her high-heeled shoes.

Madam had been brought to Court a beauty, fit to hold up her head amid a company whose boast was that their faces had been their fortunes.

At one of the masques, given by the danceloving Queen Catherine, Madam's fresh, fair face had attracted the notice of the King. He had asked the name of the saucy-looking beauty, and the few words of favour he dropped in her ear turned the girl's head, and fired her heart with

ambition; all to be crushed by her sickening and falling ill of that ruthless ravager, small-pox, and the price of her life was the loss of her beauty. Thus, in the very heyday of youth, bitterness had been her portion. Neglect and disappointment had soured her nature, and a final blow was given when the second son, whose hand she had thankfully accepted, repaid her condescension by dving just before his elder brother was killed, thus depriving her of her last hope of being "My Lady." True, of late years, her ambition was somewhat conciliated by the honours given to the present Earl-her favourite son-although these her spiteful old tongue depreciated, saying, with significance, that if her face had been left as God made it, her children would have had no need to be ennobled by Anne Hyde's fat daughter. although Madam sneered at the deposed Kingas she did at everyone in misfortune-and called his adherents fools, she hated Mary and Anne. And her son, knowing this, was well pleased that her dislike should keep her away from Court, so that she could put no check on his actions, nor with her sharp tongue and cutting speeches give offence to the, for a long time, all-powerful Duchess, and his great patron, Marlborough. Notwithstanding this, on most matters of importance he sought counsel from his mother, and seldom embarked on any scheme without first hearing what she had to say regarding it. This known fact made his present conduct the more extraordinary, for Merton had come down merely charged with a message to Madam, which message was, that his lord desired that his daughter, Lady Sarah, and her nurse, Dame Margery, should, under charge of Merton, repair to London with all possible speed. added, that Lady Sarah would quickly return, and that the motives for this sudden visit would be conveyed to Madam, in a letter which would meet with her entire sanction and approval. But, for the present, no soft speeches could appease the turbulent old lady. As Merton had anticipated, she was in a very tornado of rage. She stormed at Merton, she defied his master, declaring that until she knew for why, Lady Sarah should not set foot outside the house. She railed at Merton for a false knave and rogue, who sought to hide what he was bound to tell. She asked, who but a fool would come riding forty miles, and not know the reason of his coming? She put a hundred questions, premised as many possibilities, but Merton

could do no more than repeat his message. He confessed that he himself had been filled with curiosity at not being able to make a guess at the reason for my lord desiring the presence of Lady Sarah. Her Grace of Marlborough and the Duke were still absent from Court. Lady Masham was never away from the Queen's side, and it was well-known who Lady Masham favoured. There were those in London who swore they'd met the Chevalier, and that he was lodged close to the Palace in Kensington. Her Majesty had never been so open as since the death of the Electress. Why, she had given Mr. D'Urfey £50 for the song he made up about "Poor old Dowager Sophy," and when he sung it, Her Majesty laughed till the tears ran down her cheeks. Oh! it was true: Merton himself heard His Grace of Torbolton tell the story to my lord as he waited on them at supper.

"Torbolton!" Madam stared in surprise. "What, he who married the cousin of Anne Kingsmill?"

"The same," Merton answered, adding "that the Duchess and Lady Winchelsea were still close friends, yet so were the Duke and my lord; for my lord had greatly given up frequenting clubs, and seldom played with any one at cards, saving 'twas the Duke and in his own house."

"The Duke! Does the Duke play?"

"Play! Well, in good faith, Madam, 'tis his grace who is the hotter of the two. Only so late as the day I was sent off, my lord and he had sat from supper, through the night, and on till the day was broad. High words passed between them, too; but luck had been on our side, that I could see, and 'twas after they had parted that my lord sent for me and bade me start on this errand, and, 'Look ye, Merton,' says he, 'gin I see Lady Sarah here on Thursday forenoon, you sha'nt have cause to call your master niggardly,' and he ended with a good round oath, which showed the pleasant humour he was in."

All this but served to sharpen Madam's curiosity; but, as nothing more could be drained out of Merton, he was dismissed, and Dame Margery was sent for. For fully five minutes "Alack! alas!" was all the poor old lady could find breath to say.

And now, after this preface, the time has come to introduce the object of all this discussion—the principal actor in this unexpected summons—the unconscious young girl who is to make this unlooked-for journey.

Sarah Downham was the only child of Lord Downham's second wife-a wife who had lived sufficiently long to perpetrate the unpardonable mistake of bringing into the world a girl instead of the coveted heir. Now what did Lord Downham want with daughters? His former lady had supplied him with two of these. But what in an earl's daughter was counted a misfortune-the first Lady Downham had been a Percy-was a positive crime in the only child of a newly-created baronet, whose grandfather had cried wares upon the Cheap. Madam would say, between a laugh and a sneer, she'd have forgiven the poor wretch if she'd taken her brat with her; but what was to be done with that wizened-face atom that squawked like an unfledged blackbird?

However, do what they would and neglect it as they did, the "atom" had no intention of parting with its small amount of life. It battled through measles, colic, teething, with a tenacity that at length even overcame Madam, and resigning herself to the inevitable, she gave up all hope of being rid of the incumbrance, and little Sarah was let run as wild as any ploughman's child on her father's estate.

In time, some one suggested that she ought to be taught to read, and in default of any other teacher being at hand, my lord's chaplain undertook the task, and executed it so creditably, that instead of being rated for spending her time in running the fields, Nurse Margery's present complaint was that the child sat poring over books from morning till night, reading the same trash again and again, laughing and crying at the nonsense set down, as if it was all Gospel truth. Margery took care never to utter a reproach in Madam's hearing, or the poor child might find her one solace taken from her, and it was little in the way of pleasure she was ever likely to have. Sixteen last Lammas, and never a hint dropped that she'd be taken to London and presented at Court, as her sisters had been. Madam flouted the bare idea. Court forsooth! Why were there not nunneries—as in the olden times-to pack off such daughters to? They were of no use out in the world, and when the chaplain -good Thomas Warner-would speak some kindly word in praise of his little pupil, Madam, with a cutting laugh, would point to his leg, shortened and deformed, and say that but for that he might aspire to take the girl himself, and by interest get to be a bishop, as others before him had done.

Such and like sarcasms effectually silenced a

man, who was as modest as he was clever; but they did not prevent him thinking that those who took the pains to study Sarah Downham's pale face, might find in it a rarer charm than was ever seen in the pink and white beauty of her handsome True it was that her complexion was sallow; that great rings added to the mournful expression of her brown eyes; that her tender, wistful mouth could not boast cherry lips; and the shape of her small head was lost by the hideous fashion in which it was held fit to dress her hair. But these defects time and care would remedy, as a modiste would improve her figure, which, in the clumsy gown of Nanton manufacture, or the rusty tabbinet, fashioned by Dame Margery, presented a most unshapely appearance.

Certainly, our poor little Sarah looked a comical figure as she sat curled up on the high window-seat poring over a volume of plays which she had surreptitiously brought from off a shelf in the gun room. It seemed strange for such a book to interest a child, for Sarah looked no more than one, but Lord Downham's library was scantily supplied, and those were not the days when stories were written for the young to read. Learning in women was not looked on with much favour—it was enough for them to know how to turn their personal charms to good account—and books, unless they contained some coarse satire or scandal, were seldom or never opened.

Thanks, however, to her friend, Thomas Warner—called by some few a pedant, and by many a fool—Sarah's quick mind had been more than ordinarily cultivated; and though, in these days, she would have been thought wofully ignorant, then, that a girl could comprehend and take interest in any subject outside cookery and toilette receipts, almost stamped her as an educated woman.

Thrown entirely on her own resources—without a single companion—little wonder that the girl sought to live among the heroes and heroines of her romances, and fed her vivid imagination with their fictitious joys and sorrows. So engrossed was she now that for some moments she paid no heed to Dame Margery's puffing and panting, interlarded with doleful groans and gasping ejaculations; but when at length the old lady gave out her startling communication, Sarah was utterly unable to grasp its meaning.

"London! I go to London? No, no, Merton is mistaken; my lord could never want me."

"Want ye or not, child, 'tis to fetch you he's been sent, and the matter stands fixed that we start to-morrow by break of day, and Dick has gone down with word to Master Watling to have his two best horses ready to put in with Madam's Flemings."

"Four horses! and only for me and you."

"And the crowning mercy is that the flying coach don't come Nanton way, or such haste is my lord in that he'd tempt Providence by sending us in that. Alack! alack! 'twixt the upset of going, and Madam's bawling and flouting, I'm like one in a maze. I can't tell where to lay my hand on a single thing."

"I'll help you. I'll take out my clothes." Sarah was trembling with excitement. "I have so very few, Nurse, that they won't take us long."

"Tut, tut, child, there's more to think of than clothes. Think you I'd stir without salves and simples? Who knows what may befall us on the way? Why all our limbs may be broke by the overturning of the coach, or our throats may be cut, and our bodies flung into a ditch; or should it please the Lord we escape these evils, there's the sweating sickness, or other of the town plagues. Nay, child, don't laugh, keep that until we find ourselves safe back at Nanton Cross again, which God grant may be soon."

At this point an interruption came in the shape of an invitation to join the supper in the housekeeper's room, and by the time the substantial meal was ended, and the party had indulged in an extra glass of Merton's unrivalled Lambswool, Dame Margery began to take a more cheerful view of things, and, going to give a last look at her charge before settling for the night, she chided Sarah for being still awake when she knew they must be up and off by cock-crow next morning, and finally refused to bid the girl good-night until she received a promise that she would shut her eyes and go to sleep at once; in spite of which the dawning day found poor Sarah still tossing, unable to find rest because of the wild hopes and fears which filled her with emotion. Gladly did she welcome Letty, the housemaid, who came clumping in telling her it was time to rise, and that being so busy and flustered with getting together their things, Mistress Margery had bade her come to give her help to Lady Sarah, and assist her in her dressing. During this operation, Letty heaved many a sigh that she was not going with them. She would die happy and content if she co ... t once have a sight of London, and she har at 1

Sarah's journey turn out to be a place at Court, or the winning of a husband, she would remember that she and Letty had known each other since they were born. Sarah smiled at Letty's simplicity in thinking such grandeur could be in store for her, a smile which a sigh quickly chased away as she recalled that terrible suggestion which Madam had made, that possibly her father had found some rich woman of quality who was wanting someone to wash her china, and comb her lap-dogs. Sarah's eyes filled with tears at the bare thought of such a humiliation: better, a thousand times, to live and die at Nanton, where in their rough way everyone cared for her. Fortunately, however, little time was given to spend in regrets. In Merton's haste to start, the whole household was up and busy. Sarah had to force down the bowl of bread and milk prepared for her breakfast. Then, as the sun was rising over the oaks and the elms, the coach—with Sarah and nurse Margery inside, and Merton on horseback ahead of them-went lumbering through the scarce-awakened village, on its way to London.

CHAPTER II.

ACTING under his instructions, it had been arranged by Merton that they should travel all that day, sleep the night at the Green Dragon at Bridge Moat, and, by starting early, arrive in London at, or shortly after, 10 o'clock on Thursday morning. Therefore, while Dame Margery nods and dozes through the journey, and Lady Sarah gazes by turn at drowsy villages and quiet towns, at orchards, and those tracts of common land—patched and bare—then to be seen in the very heart of cultivated England, we will take a look at Richard Bellingham, fifth Baron and first Earl of Downham, as he sits chuckling over a letter which has just been delivered to him.

In appearance he is a fair specimen of the fine gentleman of his day, with a frank face, and an easy bearing which invites those to whom he is a stranger to put confidence in him, to believe his word, and to rely on his promises. Who could suspect this seemingly generous impulsive man to be, not only an inveterate, but an unscrupulous gamester, not so much possessed by the demon of play as by the demon of gain: for when was it known that my lord indulged his passion with one who had little to lose?

This prudence had served to make the great Duke lenient towards his protégé's well-known failing, and certain transactions had bound the two so closely together, that with John of Marlborough's rise or fall Lord Downham was bound to sink or swim.

Of late the partisans of the Marlborough faction had been full of anxious doubts and fears, and old Madam had penned a letter to her son asking him whether he would not show wisdom by making some friends among the opposite party; and a similar idea having come to my lord, he began to show himself less frequently at his clubs-he was seen more in general, and less in party society. He was heard—in places where he knew it would be repeated-to profess an honest admiration for certain Jacobite leaders, until propitious fate throwing in his way the Duke of Torbolton, the two struck up a sudden and violent friendship. The Duke was more than suspected of favouring the exiles of St. Germain's, Lord Mar had stayed at his house; Lady Winchelsea, the Queen's chamber-woman, was his wife's cousin; therefore, for Lord Downham's purpose-so far as politics went-the Duke was just the man he wanted. But above this his grace possessed another charm. From his earliest years he had never been able to withstand gambling. Whether it took the shape of cards, speculations, schemes, lotteries, he fell a victim to the snare-too often spread for him. Games of chance were his passion, and he would play with increasing eagerness from night until In many respects an amiable kindmorning. hearted man, this one vice neutralised all his virtues. It made him sacrifice the welfare and happiness of those he loved best, and stoop to actions which lowered him in their good opinion, and filled him with self-reproach and shame. All he could command of his once-princely fortune he had squandered and thrown away, until now he was, comparatively speaking, a pensioner on his only son, to whom he was continually applying for sanction to sell land, and cut down timber, on estates whose trees had been the boast of generations.

In every way he found his newly-made friend, Lord Downham, a most genial companion; and, before long, scarce a day passed without the Duke presenting himself at Downham House professedly to discuss the news, but in reality drawn there by that fatal temptation which he seemed unable to resist. Believing that Lord Downham was a man whose nature was as honest and honourable as his own, the Duke fell into each trap laid for him, and only awoke from a dream that he was in greater luck than his adversary, to find that he was stripped of everything he had any right to; that his word was pledged without a chance of being redeemed; and that, unless help was given to him, his honour was irretrievably gone, and his name disgraced.

The scales had suddenly fallen from his eyes, and at last he saw plainly the unscrupulous, crafty nature of the man against whom before he would not hear a word spoken. What could he do? How avenge his wrong? In the spirit of the day he longed to risk his life, even to sacrifice it, in the hope of giving a death-blow to his enemy. But before a challenge could be given his debts of honour must be paid, else it might be said that murder was an easy way of wiping out a heavy score. And then he had so boasted of his new friend's generous qualities, his easy thoughtlessness, his genial humour, that to confess he had been hoodwinked and cheated was more than humiliating. What could he do? To whom could he turn? Evidently his adversary had no intention of giving quarter, for when his grace had spoken of straitened means, encumbered estates, and finally of being partially dependent on his son's forbearance, Lord Downham made no other answer than to inquire, "How much could the Duke command? What sum was he able to guarantee payment of?" For a few minutes the Duke brightened; perhaps he had misjudged the man, and, wishing to pay all that it was in his power to give, he named a sum which, though large, fell short of half his debt. Lord Downham gave a contemptuous shrug, and then rising, clapped the crestfallen Duke on the shoulder as he said, " Nay, man, but fortune's a sorry jade, playing all of us false by turns; to-day she is fickle to thee, to-morrow 'twill be my turn, as it has been full many a time before. Why, look ye, until now I've never seen luck since the year began, but there"—and he snapped his fingers in token of contemptuous indifference.

"I take my luck or my loss as well as any man," said the Duke, gloomily; "but here unwittingly I have staked more than I can call my own. I was carried away—not seeing as clearly as you

seem to have seen—and, to speak honest truth, I cannot see what can be done."

"Then, on my word, I can. Look ye, my lord: you have an only son—a model of excellence. I have one daughter left—a model of virtue. Let the union of these two paragons cancel the debt between us."

The Duke stared in bewildered amazement.

"I see your grace scarce takes in my meaning, which, to lay aside all jesting, is this. My daughter is of a marriageable age, and naturally desires to be introduced into the world. This it does not at present suit me to do, any more than it suits me to restore to her that portion of her mother's dower by which a husband for her would be secured. As times go, a bride who has no fortune in her face must have one in her pocket. This little matter settled between your grace and myself would have given her her dowry. As it is, after what I have heard from you, I offer that your son takes my girl for wife, and that his father keeps her dower-money."

The Duke's whole manner betrayed his indignation. "Never," he cried; "never will I condemn my son to an ignominious marriage."

"Then never will I condemn my daughter to an ignominious spinsterhood. The money your grace will pay me will enable me to open negotiations with a family noble as your own, although its necessities preclude its members from forming a penniless alliance."

"'Sdeath," roared the Duke; "have I not shown you that to pay you all you say I owe is more than I can do. My son is an honourable gentleman, my lord, who—"

"Will doubtless hesitate to let his father's name be disgraced, and his own tarnished, when, by a small sacrifice of sentiment, he can save both."

The Duke groaned audibly, and, seizing the moment of advantage, Lord Downham said, with formal courtesy, "It is with regret I find that an urgent necessity deprives me of the pleasure of remaining longer in your grace's company. I will desire my people to attend your summons, and, in withdrawing, I venture to advise you to lay the matter before Lord Rosemont, and until Wednesday I will hold myself silent, and free to hear his decision. After that it will be out of my power to allow my actions to be guided by any consideration towards your grace."

Lord Downham gave a ceremonious salute,

which the Duke as ceremoniously returned; and, without another word, the two separated, Lord Downham to send for Merton, and despatch him to Nanton; the Duke to sit awhile lost in gloomy meditation, and then to quit the house in which he had learnt his most bitter lesson.

What passed between the father and son none ever knew; but on the following evening a messenger arrived, bearing a letter, the gist of which was that, in consideration of the Duke of Torbolton being released from certain conditions—named in the letter—Lord Rosemont pledged himself to marry the Lady Sarah Downham.

It was this letter which lay in his lordship's band, and which served for the merriment in which he was indulging.

"My ugly duckling a Duchess!" he exclaimed. "Odds faith, but this is the boldest game I ever ventured on, and in my hand I see the trump card which makes me safe, whether the wind blows fair from France or Hanover." And then he fell to reflecting more seriously over the whole transaction, sneering the while at the credulity of the father, and the pliability of the son.

"Merton is safe to bring them up on Thursday," he murmured, turning to consult the letter, "so I will answer his grace, and say that I will leave the day and hour to the bridegroom's choice. He has but to name it, and he will find the lady here to receive him."

This answer was despatched, and brought for reply a second letter, saying that reasons made it necessary that the marriage should take place on the forthcoming Thursday. To this Lord Downham readily agreed. To his mind the sooner the better, and for Thursday it was accordingly fixed.

No obstacles stood in the way of hasty marriages then; fully fifty years had to roll by ere the Houses were called upon to pass Chancellor Hardwicke's Bill, which made the solemnisation of matrimony without banns or licence an offence punishable by transportation. The Fleet, Mint, and Mayfair vied with each other in allurements held out to clandestine minors, and persons of all classes patronised these unlicensed chapels.

Lord Downham, however, had no need to have recourse to such unconventional means. For reasons of his own he much preferred that the ceremony should be solemnised in a church, and, with that view, he sent word to the incumbent of St. Martin's, in whose parish his house lay, to be in readiness at a stated hour on Thursday morning.

He was sure that Merton would press the party on with all speed, and at an early hour he began speculating how near they might possibly bea certain uncontrollable nervousness causing him to feel unusually impatient. He might have spared himself anxiety, for already the looked-for trio were nearer than he supposed. They had driven through the rustic hamlet of Newington, and-passing from the Surrey to the Middlesex side-had crossed London Bridge (then a narrow highway darkened by tall old houses), and were wondering at the noise and bustle of the Cheap. To Sarah, who had never been ten miles beyond Nanton, the sight of so many people buying and selling was marvellous beyond belief. The shops. with their open fronts and painted signs, amazed her, and she found endless amusement in listening to the morning cries of-"New flounders:" "Crab, crab, any crabs;" "Cherry ripe, cherry ripe;" "Hot peas-cods;"-making a medley, above which rang out the shrill "What lack ye?" of the apprentices, who stood swaggering in front of their masters' shops, vaunting the superior qualities of their wares.

Little wonder that the clatter and din bewildered the country maiden, and by turns she appealed to Dame Margery to join in admiring the merchants' stately houses or in wondering with her how it was possible for Merton to find his way.

"Oh! nurse. Who could grow weary of such a wonderful city?"

"Why, I for one, child," the dame would answer, querulously; "I'm weary now with all this jaunting of my poor bones; and the stench from the foul gutters hath so turned my stomach that I doubt much if any of the town-made victuals will stay upon it."

Suddenly Merton rode up to announce that they were passing by Somerset House. Opposite was "The Maypole," and in another five minutes or so they would be at the end of their journey. Poor Sarah! at once her spirits began to droop, and all her fears came back to her. The presence of her father always took away her speech and benumbed her faculties.

"Oh! nurse," she exclaimed, "I would that we were back home."

"'Tis o' little use wishing. I doubt me much if 'twill be permitted for either of us ever to see Nanton Cross again. I feel as——"

But an end was abruptly put to all forebodings by a turn bringing them to a pair of high gates, through which they arrived in front of a handsome house, at the door of which Merton was waiting to help them alight. His orders were to take them both to where my lord was waiting, and he bade them follow him with all speed.

By this time Sarah's courage had completely flown, her heart beat fast, her knees knocked together, so that she could hardly mount the staircase up which Merton led her, and, throwing open a door, he stood aside for her to enter. The trembling girl managed to drop a decent curtsey, but not a word would come in answer to her father's rough greeting; after which he bade Merton take them off and see that they had breakfast. "And look to her, dame," he cried; "see that she puts on the bravest attire thou cans't muster. Fine feathers make fine birds, says the proverb-maker," and he laughed boisterously, showing that he was in a pleasant humour.

Reassured by this excellent reception, Dame Margery was nothing loath to do justice to the substantial meal prepared for them, but Sarah's appetite was soon satisfied. Excitement was the food which fed her, and, leaving her nurse still engaged, she went to the window which looked into the courtyard, watching all that went on. Something seemed to engross her attention; she bent forward for a better view, and then cried, "Nurse, nurse, come and look at the fine gallants who are coming here. One is old and one is young. They both seem grave—what for, I wonder? Who can they be?"

CHAPTER III.

"HIS GRACE OF TORBOLTON, and my Lord Rosemont," announced the lacquey, as he threw open the door of one of the principal apartments in which Lord Downham was sitting, trying to look and to seem unaware of any particular awkwardness in this prearranged meeting. The Duke and his son bowed and seated themselves in a manner that put an effectual stop to any greater show of cordiality, and with a half-laugh and a swagger, Lord Downham threw himself into the

chair from which he had risen, and for several minutes no one spoke. Lord Rosemont turned towards the window and stood looking out. His grace, flinging himself into a seat, plunged his hands into his capacious pockets, and sat ruefully gazing at his shoe-buckles. Recovering himself, Lord Downham made another effort to impress upon his guests how completely he was at his ease.

He asked, "Had they read that day's Spectator?"
"Was it true that for over two hours Lord Mar had been closeted with the Queen and Lady Masham?"
Did they credit the report that the Chevalier, while paying a stolen visit to a fair lady at Tower Beeches, had had a narrow escape of his life?

It all was of no avail; he could draw forth nothing in reply but "yes" or "no," and in despair he was forced to give in and let silence have its sway. Presently the door was again thrown open, and the servant announced that Mr. Ferrers had arrived, and was waiting my lord's pleasure.

"Show him here," said Lord Downham, then, addressing the Duke, he added: "My daughter, Lady Sarah, has arrived from Nanton, and is at present being served with breakfast; but if you desire her presence we will send her a summons to appear."

"No, no; better that we meet anon—at the church," Lord Rosemont answered, hastily speaking for the first time since his entrance.

"As you will, my lord," answered his father-inlaw elect, with a grim smile, and turning, the eyes of the two men met, and for a few moments they steadfastly regarded each other.

Contrasted with Lord Downham's tall, powerful figure, and bold, reckless face, Lord Rosemont looked even younger than his age of twenty-two vears warranted. He was fair and slim, with a delicate cast of features answering to the reputation he had gained for over-love of study, literary pursuits, and travel. He and his father had had little or nothing in common; his tastes and habits at once chafed and perplexed the Duke, who could have been more tolerant towards the escapades of the most roistering gallant than towards this milksop of a son, who was never the worse for wine, abhorred the very sight of cards, and whose name had never been mixed up with those racy Court scandals which but added lustre to the fame of the beaux of that day. Lord Downham felt his contempt rise for such a prig. "They'll be two fools

together," he thought, *apropos* of the approaching alliance; then, hearing footsteps outside, he said to the Duke, "You and your son have, of course, discussed this matter together, and approve of my letter of yesterday?"

The Duke nodded assent.

"Then, before the lawyer enters, I may take it we are all three agreed?"

The Duke looked towards his son as if he expected him to speak, but Lord Rosemont had turned to his old position as if the matter under discussion neither interested nor concerned him.

In spite of this affected indifference, not a sound in the room was lost upon him. Naturally of a nervous, impulsive temperament, he was strung up to a painful pitch of excitement-more on account of the scene which had taken place between his father and himself, than of the sacrifice he was going to make. For the first time the barriers of reserve between the two had given way. Stung with shame and remorse, the Duke's usual bluster had forsaken him, and, feeling he must speak to somebody, he had poured out his grief to his son. It was a humiliating position for each, and, perhaps, Lord Rosemont felt its incongruity the more acutely of the two; notwithstanding, the confession made, and the confidence established, he felt more sympathy with his father's position, more tolerance towards his weakness than he had ever done before. As for the Duke, he did nothing but lament that he had so misunderstood his son, and that he had not been open and honest with him before. In all that Lord Rosemont did he made but two stipulations, one was that his grace should give a solemn promise never again to join in any game of chance at which money was staked, and the other that he should, on no pretence, send a challenge to Lord Downham. This last condition seemed to the Duke as hard as it was unnecessary, and he tried to persuade, cajole, and argue it out with his son, but to no effect. Lord Rosemont remained immovable, and in the end received the promises he exacted.

Never had the depths of Lord Downham's character been more fully gauged than by this young man, whom, in his heart, he was despising as a fool and a coward. Smarting, as Lord Rosemont was, under the double sense of injury to his father and injustice to himself, what wonder that he

shrank from seeing her, who was to form the link to bind him to this unprincipled hypocrite.

The entrance of the two lawyers disturbed these unpleasant reflections, and then the explanations, erasures, final settlement, and signing of documents which ensued, required Lord Rosemont's undivided attention. It was all over by the time the clock chimed twelve, and then Lord Downham suggested that now, perhaps, it would be as well to adjourn to the church "St. Martin's, close by," he added, "and at the door I will present the bride to you, my lord, asking her pardon that the introduction has been postponed so unduly."

"My son leaves to-day for a period of foreign travel," said the Duke. "The vessel drops down the river after noon, so we shall crave to take our departure as soon as the—the—ceremony is over."

Lord Downham tried to force a laugh, as he made some allusion to this new-fashioned honey-moon.

"My mother hath yet to learn the honour which is imposed upon her," Lord Rosemont said, his voice trembling in spite of himself.

"Yes," exclaimed the Duke, hurriedly, "Rosemont thought it better that her grace should not be spoken to upon the matter. He has behaved very nobly to me, has my boy—" but before the Duke could get out more, the son had laid his hand upon his father's arm, saying, "We need not pursue this subject. Your Grace and I have settled the matter between us, and Lord Downham would, I feel sure, have much difficulty in understanding the motives which make me yield to my father's exigencies."

Lord Downham's florid face grew purple; he made a great effort to conceal his rage and confusion under a most profound bow, to which the father and son responded, and then, saying they would proceed to the church, the two turned and left the apartment.

Five minutes later Merton came bustling into the room, where Dame Margery and Lady Sarah sat. "Odds fish!" he cried, "but wonders will never cease. My lord has ordered a couple of chairs, and I am sent to bring your ladyship to him."

"And not Margery?" exclaimed Sarah, frightened to death at the thought of appearing in her father's presence alone. "Oh, good Master Merton, what can my lord want with me?"

Merton shook his head. "'Tis more than I can guess at," he said; "but have no fear; we shall learn where you are from those I send with the chairs. The varlets owe me many a good turn. Most like," he added, to cheer her, "it may be but to get you some new conceit at the mantuamakers."

"And not before it's needed," put in Margery.
"My lord spoke of brave apparel, but we've brought
none, for the best o' reasons, that we'd nought to
bring. Speak up, child, and tell how Madam flouts
if but a yard o' dimity is asked for you."

While this was being said, poor Sarah donned her time-worn hood, and struggled into an outdoor garment, designed with the apparent possibility of its lasting until she was as tall and bulky as Dame Margery herself, whose maxim in making anything for Sarah was that one could always take in, but it was not so easy to let out.

Thus equipped, poor Sarah looked a droll figure; and it was little wonder that, at sight of her, Lord Downham gave vent to his astonishment and displeasure by rapping out several of those oaths with which, at that date, the speech of fine gentlemen was larded. Seeing, however, that no better effect was produced than making the girl look seared and terrified, he calmed his angry tone, and turned his abusive epithets on those who had sent her off so ill-provided.

"Come here," he said, "and let's have a better look at you," and he put his hand under her little pointed chin, and turned her face upwards so that he might critically inspect it.

Perhaps he found it more comely than he expected; perhaps the dark, tender eyes touched some soft spot in his world-hardened heart—anyway a kindlier expression came into his face as, patting her on the shoulder, he said: "Take heart, little one, thou hast nought to fear." Then summoning Merton, he bade him call up the chairs.

While waiting, his lordship seemed to reflect. "Perhaps I'd best say something to prepare her," he was thinking, and by way of doing so he asked: "How old are you, child?"

"Sixteen last month, my lord."

"Sixteen! good faith, I forgot you were so old. You're quite a woman, eh? Think it's time I looked up a husband for you, eh?" Sarah made a poor attempt to smile. Her face grew red, and she felt uneasy as she recalled the few times she had ever seen her father merry—mirth followed by such outbursts of rage that before it even Madam had fled in terror.

"Come, don't be scared to open thy mouth, girl. What say you to going to Court, eh? to balls, and plays, and jaunts. That 'ud suit you, eh? What? speak up." Sarah tried to stammer out a reply, although, not certain whether her father was in jest or earnest, she knew not how to answer. Fortunately, at this moment. Merton came back to say the chairs were in the hall, and, following her father, Sarah found herself being carried to her destination without any further explanation from her father.

Her curiosity was as lively as ever; but her fears were greatly lessened by hearing his lordship say they should return within an hour. In that short time nothing very terrible could happen, and soon Sarah was enjoying the novelty of the sights they were passing. Covent Garden, with its far-famed Piazza, filled her with an admiration she had not got over when her chair stopped, and she found herself before a church, on the steps of which, as if waiting for her, stood her father.

There was a few minutes' delay, and then the chair-door was opened. Lord Downham took his daughter by the hand, saying, "Now then, step out bravely, for, my faith on't, but I've found you a gallant who'll turn you into such a grand dame that behind your train half the madams who go to Court will walk."

The girl turned so as to confront her father.

"What is it you would do with me, my lord? I do not understand you."

"You'll very soon find out; there's no time for explanations now;" and he pulled her arm roughly through his own. "Nought is wanted from you but to do as you are bidden and be thankful."

He pushed open the inner door, and Sarah found herself within the church, being hurried up the aisle to the spot where the Duke, his son, and the two lawyers stood waiting.

"Here is the bride," said Lord Downham, giving Sarah a push towards Lord Rosemont, "Lady Sarah Downham," and the expression of his face

showed that he enjoyed the start which the young man gave.

Casting a look of positive loathing on the queer little figure before him, "Heavens," he cried, "you are never going to marry me to that dowdy," and he turned to his father, but the Duke's face was hidden as he leaned against one of the pillars.

Poor Sarah flung a wild glance around. Was there no one to help—no one to rescue her? Was she in her senses? Was all this a dream, and should she awake to find herself in her bed at Nanton Priors?

Alas! a clergyman had come-some one was arranging them before him. He was speakingtelling her to say something after him. A hand of ice touched her as it placed something on her finger; she tried to grasp the altar-rail, which seemed now far-now near. The air grew stiflinga whole hive of bees buzzed in her ears, and then nothing more—until she was in the open air, and from a long way off a voice seemed saying, "Come, come, you're all right now, eh? You keep your churches too shut up, Mr. Verger; the air inside is stifling. Will you drink some water?" The girl shook her head. Opening her eyes she cast a hurried glance around. No one was near her but her father and a little old man in a black cloak, who stood wondering how much he was likely to make out of this business, about which he felt little or no curiosity. Bridegrooms went off, and brides fainted every day. If she had been dragged to the altar, and he bribed to keep the doors locked while the parson galloped through the service, 'twould have been a different matter. and he might have earned a crown piece; and, as he took up his pitcher, he gave an audible grunt on the waywardness of fortune.

"That's brave," said Lord Downham, pleased to see Sarah struggle into a standing position; "you'll soon feel all right now. Here, master—" and the piece he put into the old man's hand made that worthy brisker by twenty years. "Bawl for our chairs—Lord Downham and the Countess of Rosemont," and he turned with a smile to enjoy his daughter's surprise and pleasure, instead of which, with a sharp cry of pain, she covered her face with her hands, moaning out, "Take me home—oh! take me home,"

(To be continued.)

ATALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

Subject for June—"Are women's mental faculties better adapted to the writing of fiction than those of men?" Papers not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before June 20th. The best paper on either side will be published in the magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Give the opening chapter of an imaginary novel (this subject has been set by special request). Give an estimate of the character of *Romola*. An original rondeau (as this is a well-known form of verse, no correspondence can be held upon it). Members can only enter for one of these subjects. Essays not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before June 20th.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (MAY).

T

1. From Hour's Recreation in Music, by Richard Allison.
2. From the Examen Miscellaneum, by the Earl of Dorset.

II.

1. Vincent Bourne, 1744. 2. Madrigal by Thomas Morley, 1592.

III.

1. Mrs. John Hunter, wife of the celebrated surgeon.
2. Andrew Cherry, 1762, and R. S. Sharpe.

IV.

1. Written by Bishop Heber. 2. To his wife.

V.

1. Christmas eve. 2. "That fair star trembles through my falling tears," by Mathilde Blind. 3. Love's Wisdom—
"Then down by separate pathways to the vale," by Alfred Austin.

VI.

Mr. John Jarndyce, in Bleak House.

SEARCH QUESTIONS (JUNE).

Ι.

1. Where is to be found the story of the caskets, as told by Shakespeare in *The Merchant of Venice?*

2. In what work also do we find the resemblance of Shakespeare's version most striking?

II.

I. Who wrote the sonnet, beginning-

"A tranced beauty dwells upon her face,
A lustrous summer-calm of peace and prayer"?

2. Also this one-

"My heart's ideal, that somewhere out of sight Art beautiful and gracious and alone"?

III.

1. To whom were these sonnets addressed, beginning—

"Thou that on every field of earth and sky Didst hunt for death."

"Poet, whose unscarr'd feet have trodden hell"?

2. Give the different authors.

IV.

Give authors of following quotations:-

 "When I beneath the cold red earth am sleeping, Life's fever o'er,

Will there for me be any bright eyes weeping,
That I'm no more?

Will there be any heart still memory keeping Of heretofore?" . "A place in thy memory, dearest,
Is all that I claim;
To pause and look back, when thou hearest
The sound of my name."

"Wrong not, sweet mistress of my heart,
 The merit of true passion,
 With thinking that he feels no smart
 Who sues for no compassion."

v.

At what period was the old ballad written, beginning-

"Ah, my sweet sweeting;
My little pretty sweeting,

My sweeting will I love, where'er I go"?

VI.

1. To whom did Goldsmith address this remark?-

"If you were to write a fable about little fishes, you would make the little fishes talk like whales."

2. What personage in fiction is here described ?-

"A face, habitually suppressed and quieted, was still lighted up under the quaint wig by a pair of moist, bright eyes. Had a healthy colour in his cheeks, and his face, though lined, bore few traces of anxiety."



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CHAPTER XXIX.
MARY ERROL'S DREAM.

A YEAR had passed away. Once more skies were blue, birds were singing—and the flowers were blooming round the grave of Ada Douglas.

Sad and desolate looked the Castle now, its long rows of windows muffled with blinds, its doors all closed, its courts silent and deserted, and its garden paths trodden by none save the old gardener who trained the flowers which nobody ever came to see.

Since death had robbed that home of its fairest ornament, it had remained unoccupied. The family had gone abroad shortly afterwards on account of the baronet's health, which had gradually declined after the death of his favourite child. Grief, not violent and obtrusive, but deep and silent, took possession of his mind; and, although he resumed his customary mode of life, it soon became apparent to all that he was changed as only strong natures are changed by sorrow. At first he refused to vield to the entreaties of friends who urged him to seek change of scene and occupation; but when signs of declining health began to manifest themselves in his wife, he took alarm, and immediately prepared to quit the home every room of which seemed haunted with memories of the departed. And so the Castle was shut up, and for more than a year a gloomy silence brooded over it, reminding all who passed by that the shadow from the wing of the destroying angel still rested there.

Yet a deeper gloom invested another home not

ar away. All through those dreary months the inmates of Cliff Cottage had been suffering from a living grief, whose bitterness increased with the lapse of time. For since the receipt of that single letter from Southampton no news of any kind had come from Kenneth. The imperfect means of communication then available prevented their fears from assuming a darker form at first; but as month after month glided away, without bringing the eagerly anticipated letter, the sickness of "hope deferred" began to prey upon their hearts.

No avenue of hope was left unexplored; every effort was made to gain some clue to the destiny of the exile; but the fact that Kenneth had omitted to mention the name of the vessel in which he sailed, rendered all their efforts useless. Disappointment succeeded disappointment, until at last despair laid its chilling touch upon the pulse of hope, forbidding it to throb again. Slowly but surely the conviction took possession of their minds that Kenneth was dead. Those only who have known what it is to be compelled to relinquish a precious hope, desperately clung to through years of waiting, can tell what anguish accompanies the act.

Strangely enough, Mrs. Errol was the first to own to this belief; and when her daughter strove to dislodge the impression, she only said: "I know he's dead: I have a feeling in my heart that tells me I'll ne'er see him again." Nor did any subsequent fluctuations of hope in the others affect her settled belief.

But from the day on which it entered her mind,

she began to droop. The light went out of her eyes; her step grew heavier; and a languor pervaded her movements. She seemed to lose interest in all the things that previously had engrossed it. Soon they became aware that their mother's heart was broken. Then a dread, portentous silence gathered round that name, which had been till then so often on their lips. They dared not mention it when they saw what power it had to unlock the flood-gates of sorrow. Yet, despite their care, little trilling incidents occurred at times which, without the assistance of language, recalled the absent one so forcibly, that the disguise of reserve was torn aside, and the dominant thought of each heart disclosed.

Ronald would never confess that he believed his brother dead. Had such been the case, he argued, tidings would certainly have reached them, since Kenneth had taken with him certain articles from which his name and address could be ascertained. A darker suspicion haunted his mind, to which, however, he gave no expression even to his sister. Remembering the desperate mood in which Kenneth had left, and the weakness of his nature when assailed by temptation in plausible forms, he could not dismiss the fear that he had fallen a victim to intemperance once more, and gone so deep into sin, that he dared not apprise them of his condition. Such a contingency was only too probable; and his only fear was, that proof might come to them any day from undreamt-of sources.

His dread of such an event was increased tenfold by the fact that, since his flight, poor Kenneth's reputation, so far from suffering, had steadily risen, just in proportion as that of Mr. Lesly sank. Those who had known him before his intimacy with his enemy led him astray, and who could now more clearly trace his declension to Lesly's malign influence, became confirmed in their original opinion of his character, and freely assigned to Lesly's machinations the fatal step which had led to his ruin.

That gentleman was becoming less popular as time went on. The disguises wherewith he had so sedulously striven to conceal his true character, were now beginning to wear thin, and glimpses could now and then be obtained of ugly realities. For no disguise, however cunning, can long bear the scrutiny of truth. And though nothing actually incriminating could be discovered in his conduct,

he was regarded with growing suspicion. One or two reckless tongues had even mooted the idea, that he winked at the contraband commerce transacted in the district. Whether any report of such slander reached that worthy's ears or not, he speedily gave it practical contradiction by demanding from Government additional coast protection, and securing, through his own recommendation, a more efficient substitute for the redoubtable Mr. Blinkie.

Notwithstanding even those incontestable proofs of conscientiousness in the discharge of official duty, public estimation refused to be much affected thereby, and Mr. Lesly found himself generally avoided and tacitly condemned as the man who had, in order to get rid of a possible rival, deliberately wrought the ruin of the merriest, most generous youth in Glenathole.

Thus it was that, aware of these facts, Ronald Errol lived in dread of any future revelation that might alter the verdict of his fellow-men, and bring fresh dishonour on the name of which he was so proud.

The bitter regret evinced whenever he alluded to the subject of his brother's disgrace, had more than once occasioned Mary surprise. He had always been keenly sensitive to anything even bearing a semblance to dishonour, and secmed to regard his father's name as a proud heritage to be carefully guarded from everything likely to tarnish it; but, in referring to Kenneth's fall, he invariably spoke as if he personally had lost in it some valuable possession which there was little hope of regaining. But what this was, Mary could not divine; and there was a ne plus ultra in her brother's character which assured her it would be futile to try.

To her the testimony borne by the people to poor Kenneth's character brought the only comfort she could experience in her bitter sorrow. She could not but rejoice that at last the truth was becoming known, and that men were beginning to see how much her brother's transgression had been the result of a deliberate plot to effect his undoing. But, oh! what availed it to him, now that he was dead, as she could no longer doubt?

Never till now had she known what loyal affection he had won from many in the village and neighbourhood. After the first few weeks succeeding his departure inquiries were made for him at the Cottage from time to time; and not the least

painful element in the grief of its inmates was the inability to furnish the slightest information to those eager, kindly questionings. By-and-bye the impenetrable obscurity that wrapped the fate of Kenneth became a subject of daily speculation; but those who had been in the habit of making inquiries about him at his home, no longer ventured to do so, aware that it could only occasion unnecessary pain.

It is long before those in such circumstances can really cease to expect some confirmatory evidence of the loss they have mourned so hopelessly. Despite her own belief that Kenneth was dead, Mary found herself strangely excited every time a letter was brought to the house; and each succeeding disappointment painfully reminded her that she still clung to a vague hope of tidings. Nor could it be otherwise vet, while the cruel uncertainty as to his fate remained. Had they known definitely that he had died, however meagre the information as to attending circumstances, the trial would have been easier to bear. But oh! the never-ending suspense! the racking anxiety! and the agonising conjectures as to how he had met his death-these were the things that made their affliction almost more than they could bear. And it was this craving for certainty which kept them constantly in a fever of anticipation, even although the event only proved it vain.

One night, however, there came to Mary Errol what seemed more like a vision than a dream, so vivid and strong was the impression it left upon her mind.

She thought she was walking by the shore in the evening light, when suddenly a boat appeared on the horizon, whose broken mast and tattered sail stood out, black and weird, against the sun's declining disc. On it sped over the water in a course swift and undeviating as an arrow's, until it approached the very spot on which she stood. It had but one occupant, and he was guiding the rudder. Brought into clear vision, the face and features of that lone voyager straightway arrested her as by a spell. It was Kenneth, the loved and mourned-for Kenneth; but no more the same solemn, awful light was on his brow, and the eyes that looked out from beneath burned with the still radiance of stars. His form was like the thin air. no sound accompanying its movements as it glided to the shore. Awed and speechless she stood, dreading lest by a single motion she should scare away the phantom visitant. In silence he came, and placed in her hands two books. But in the anguished yearning of her soul, she stretched forth her arms to clasp him to her loving breast once more. It was but the empty air her embrace enfolded: the image had vanished, and lo! far away on the sea she saw the boat with its ghostly helmsman, moving swiftly into the shades of night. Then when it had faded, a tiny speck in distance, she thought she gathered up the volumes that had fallen at her feet. With mingled surprise and pain she recognised them: one was the familiar album he had taken away with him; the other, the Bible, his mother's gift.

Sobbing she awoke, to find her pillow drenched with tears, and every nerve in her body quivering with agitation. Often previously she had dreamt of Kenneth, but in those dreams he always figured as the brother of by-gone days, sometimes acting over again some well-remembered episode. Totally distinct from all those was this strange vision. Even through the busy hours of the day its graphic incidents kept haunting her mind, and she could not divest herself of the impression that it was a message from the dead.

So firm, indeed, was the hold it took of her mind. that she related it to her mother. Mrs. Errol was visibly moved by the strange details, especially in connection with the two books left by the visitant from the spirit world. They had missed the Bible and the album from Kenneth's collection shortly after his departure, and the circumstance of his having taken those two alone, had imparted a gleam of consolation in the first hours of their bitter grief, indicating, as it seemed to do, that he would remember his Creator and his friends. Reappearing again through the medium of a dream, this characteristic incident struck her as being peculiarly significant. To her it was but an indirect corroboration of her settled belief, that her son was dead.

Betsy, whose faithful attachment to the family entitled her to participation in all its concerns, was also told of the dream, and emphatically declared, with the air of a seer, that "something wad come o't." "Eh, sirs!" she exclaimed, "that's nae ord'nar' dream. I've aye heard tell, it's no canny to dream o' waater: they say it bodes death." Then, observing her mistress's grave, sad face, she

promptly added: "But of coorse, folk talk a heap o' havers; an' we sudna' lippen ower muckle to dreams, but rather to Ane abune us wha kens what's to befa', an' can guide a'thing weel."

Yet Mary could as little dismiss her uneasy forebodings as Betsy who counselled her to do so. She began to feel a presentiment that her dream was but the harbinger of coming news of her brother. She did not imagine, however, how soon that presentiment was to be realised.

Returning from some errand to the village, in the twilight of an October day, just a week afterwards, she perceived a man walking beside the Cottage, with a hesitating, almost timorous air, which caused her to eye him with some suspicion.

Seeing that he had attracted her notice, the man, with great diffidence, advanced, and, saluting her courteously, said: "Begging your pardon, ma'am, is this the house of a Mistress Errol?"

What instinct was it that, as she regarded the stranger's tanned face and seaman's garb, told Mary that this man had come with the tidings she yearned for, and yet dreaded to hear?

She answered the question with a brief monosyllable, her heart beating wildly all the time; and the man, reading traces of agitation in her face, betrayed in his awkward movements increasing embarrassment.

Presently he informed her:

"I've been searching all over the place for this house. You see, I'm a stranger; I've just newly come on shore from a long voyage. If it hadn't been that I was taken badly in the Indies, I would have been here a good six months ago; but I had the yellow fever, so I had to wait till I could get a place on another vessel."

Mary saw that this preamble was merely resorted to from reluctance to introduce the real object of his mission. Respecting his motive, she answered, quietly:

"I think I know what has brought you here: you have come with news of—of my brother?"

Avoiding the hungry, penetrating look she bent upon him, the stranger, bowing, said:

"Yes, ma'am, I come with news of him,"

The honest, manly face betrayed all too plainly the nature of the news he brought. No second glance was needed to convince Mary that her fears would soon be confirmed; and the persistent hope which had mocked her so long, now fled away for ever in one deep-drawn, shuddering

"Tell me," she presently requested, in as calm a voice as she could, "tell me, is my brother dead?"

"Yes," he answered, as if the word had been forced from him; and he turned away reverentially from the sight of a sister's pain.

Not till this moment did she realise how tenaciously she had clung to the precious hope of that brother's return at some distant day; up till now she had believed herself prepared for the worst; but the cruel blow, as it descended, found nothing to blunt its keenness, and penetrated even to the quick.

After some minutes of desperate conflict, she said, with a broken sob:

"Tell me all you know of him—all; for we have looked in vain through these weary months for news. Were you with him when he died?"

A spasmodic change passed over the weatherbeaten features at the question, and, hanging his head as if to avoid scrutiny, the man replied:

"No: would to God I had!"

Something in the tones of his voice as he uttered these words caused Mary's heart almost to suspend its beating.

"Oh! what do you mean?" she cried. "Don't conceal anything from me; it's better that I should know it first, if—if——"

She could not frame any expression of the cold terror she was beginning to feel at these last significant words. If the sequel should prove worse than even they had imagined, how was it to be disclosed to her poor mother?

"Yes, ma'am, I'll tell you all I know," responded the sailor; "though it's the hardest thing I ever had to do in all my life. Well, you see," he continued, "your brother—for you're his sister, aren't you?"

Mary assented.

"Ay, ay, I thought so. Many a time when he had the fever, I heard——"

"Fever? did he die of fever?" eagerly asked Mary.

"No, ma'am, not exactly from that," was the answer. "Yellow fever broke out on board ship, when we were within a few days' sight of land. Your brother took it, with a good many more—myself among them; and he and the rest of us

were put ashore at an island, with some outlandish name that I forget. There was a doctor in the place, and he looked after us. But all the accommodation we could get was the rickety huts of the natives.

"It happened that Mr. Errol and I were put into the same cabin, and so I grew better acquainted with him than on board ship; for, though, being mate, I used to pass a word with all the passengers, I couldn't get him to talk much there. But, you see, he was taken with the fever worse than me, and so had to depend on me a good deal for help.

"One night, when he was worse than usual, he called me over, and said he thought he was going to die. I tried to laugh him out of it, but it was of no use; he repeated it, and asked me if I would promise to do something for him, should I ever be spared to return to Britain again. I promised; and he drew two books from below his head—I have them in this parcel here—and gave them to me, along with his watch and a ring, asking me to carry them to you. He said I would find the address on the fly-leaf of his Bible.

"He seemed greatly relieved, poor lad, when I said I would faithfully do his bidding; and he gave me a message to take to you, that he was dying, trusting in his mother's God."

A sob from poor Mary interrupted the narrative; and the speaker, seeing her so much overcome, and feeling himself more and more unable to deliver his woful tidings, in order to gain time, presented the packet he carried to Mary.

With trembling fingers she undid the wrappings; and there—mysterious confirmation of her prophetic dream!—were the very books which her brother's wraith had brought to her in the vision. Yes, here they were, in tangible shape, the familiar volumes she remembered so well, scarcely injured by travel; and yet the hands which had handled them so carefully were now cold and lifeless.

As she turned over the leaves of the Bible, a sheet of paper fluttered to the ground. She picked it up, and scanned it greedily. It was covered with Kenneth's writing. None that has ever read a letter written by one who has died ere it reached its destination needs to be told what were Mary Errol's feelings then. Ah, what plaintive tenderness invested every word of that last message from the beloved dead!

"Dearest Mother, Sister, and Brother," so the letter ran,—"I am writing this on the wide ocean, hundreds of miles away from any land; yet over the long leagues of trackless water my thoughts fly to Glenathole and the cottage on the hill, where I know the friends I love best on earth are thinking of and praying for me. I can see you all, and almost fancy I hear your voices, though the broad ocean rolls between us. What would I not give to be with you once more? What would I not give to be able to undo the past? Vain wish: all I can do is to try, by God's help, to redeem that past, and wipe out the stains I have contracted by my sinful folly.

"Sometimes remorse almost drives me mad, to think how I have thrown away such bright prospects as were mine. But, thank God! comfort has come to me through His Word, and I have begun to see, that even for one as wicked as myself there is a hope of pardon. May the God of mercy help me, for I have help nowhere else.

"Pray for me, dear ones at home, that I may be kept from yielding to the Tempter, when he tells me I can never atone for the past, can never again find pardon and peace. And think charitably of my sins, great though they are. God knows how terrible even their memory is to me. If I could only hope to make restitution for them all, and earn a right to the esteem and love of my friends, the prospect before me would be less dreary. God in His mercy may permit me to atone in some measure-may even grant me the precious boon of seeing you all again. I was mad when I ran away: fiends of remorse were pursuing me; but oh! I feel it would have been a thousand times better had I remained to face the consequences of my folly, and taken my punishment like a man. Would to God I had!

"But the light is fading, so I must bid you all good-night, praying God to bless you.—I will write more to-morrow."

No, Kenneth, you were never to complete that letter. You knew not, when you folded it by, that, ere it was read by the loving eyes for whom you wrote it, your own would be sealed in death.

"What letter is that?" inquired the voice of Mrs. Errol, in the sharp accents that always betokened extreme agitation; and, looking round with a terrified stare, Mary beheld her mother at her side, her face pale and rigid, and her eyes fixed as if by fascination on the letter she held in her hand.

She had observed the stranger from the house, and that infallible instinct, never so keen as in a mother's heart, told her he had come with tidings of her son.

Before Mary could reply, she turned to him, and asked, "Did you bring it?"

The man differentially bowed.

"Come into the house, then," she said. "Mary, show him the way."

The unnatural calmness of her voice alarmed Mary as visible agitation would not have done: she knew it was but the hush preceding the storm.

When they entered the parlour, Mrs. Errol bade the visitor be seated, and composed herself to hear the news for which she had been trying so long to prepare.

Noticing the extreme reluctance manifested by the stranger to disclose his melancholy tidings, in order to encourage him, she said: "Don't hesitate to tell me the truth: I know you have come to tell me my son is dead. If you were beside him, you can give me the particulars of his death, and that is a' the comfort we can expect."

Yet, notwithstanding the composure of her manner, the sailor winced under the hungry gaze of the mother's eyes, and it was with difficulty he could recapitulate what he had told to her daughter.

"But, after all," he proceeded, "Mr. Errol recovered sooner than I did, though, somehow, the fever still hung about him.

"One day a ship came in sight, bound for South America. We hailed it, and the captain consented to take as many on board as had a doctor's certificate. I wondered that Mr. Errol got one, for he never seemed to me quite like himself. However, for his sake I was glad, because he seemed in desperation to get off the island.

"So we went aboard, and at first I thought I had been mistaken in my opinion about his health; but before we had been many days at sea, I began to notice one or two things about him that I didn't like. At times he would be quite merry, and talk a good deal—and he always found plenty willing to listen to him; then again he would be moody and strange, holding aloof from everybody.

"I watched him as much as I could, and I told the captain I was uneasy about him, and asked him to look after him. But many, many a time I've regretted that I didn't take alarm, and get him put under confinement. If I had, I might not have been here to-day with my sad message. For sure I am, it was the fever took his head, and made him——"

He stopped, and, averting his face, tried to control himself sufficiently to tell the terrible sequel of his tale.

At that moment the door of the room opened, and, with a grave, apprehensive look at his mother's white, transfixed face, as she kept watching the strange visitor, and at Mary's quivering features, as she stood behind her mother's chair with a letter in her hand, Ronald Errol came forward and, addressing Mrs. Errol, said:

"Mother, who is this?"

A suspicion of the truth flashed across his mind: bad news had come, and about Kenneth; but what was their precise nature?

The question hovering on his lips was anticipated by the stranger, who rose to greet him, saying:

"I'm heart-sorry, sir, to be the bearer of sad news about—about Mr. Errol."

Ronald bit his lip, and his brow contracted as in pain; but, clearing his throat, he asked, in a steady voice:

"Is my brother still alive?"

The man shook his head, and kept nervously stroking the gilt band round his cap, as he replied:

"I'm truly sorry to say he is dead. He died about nine months ago."

- "At sea?"
- "Yes."
- "And do you know what led to his death?"
- "It was fever. He had been put on shore along with some more of us on account of it, and it hadn't quite left him when he got on board again."
 - "Then he died of it afterwards?"

Once more the messenger hesitated, and Ronald could easily divine that his hesitation proceeded from reluctance to disclose some heavier disaster than he had dreamt of. He observed him turn an apprehensive glance on Mrs. Errol, who still sat motionless and rigid, waiting for the dread disclosure.

Instantly comprehending the meaning of that glance, Ronald approached his mother, and, seizing her hand affectionately, said:

"Come, mother; this is too much for you. Don't stay here. Let me hear what he has got to tell us, and I'll tell you all afterwards. Come."

But she refused to stir.

"Dinna fear for me, Ronald," she assured him; "my heart has borne many a shock: it'll bear this one too." And, turning to the stranger, she requested him to tell her the truth, whatever it was.

"It's more than I can do to tell you," was his answer, accompanied by an appealing look toward Ronald, who again urged his mother to withdraw.

Something in the man's looks seemed to forewarn her of what was coming. Her eyes dilated with horror, and, rising from her chair, she demanded, in tones that made him quail:

"Tell me this: did my son die a natural death?"

There was a pause, during which those in the room hardly dared to breathe, before he replied, in solemn, thrilling tones;

"I told you the fever took his head. One afternoon he went away to his cabin, as he had often done before. We thought he was staying there longer than usual, and by-and-bye we went to ask if he was well enough. When we had knocked twice and got no answer, we made to go into the cabin; but the door was fastened. We got it forced open, and went in. But the cabin was empty, and the window was wide open. He had—drowned himself."

Oh! the piercing shriek that burst from the mother's agonised heart! Which of those that heard it could ever forget its utter woe?

Then, as if the thunderbolt of Heaven's wrath had fallen upon her head, she reeled and fell senseless into her son's arms.

There are hours of grief from which the truest sympathy must feel itself debarred; so are there scenes over which the curtain of reverential silence must be drawn. Happy those who in such hours have the arm of Omnipotence to lean on, and who, even amid their anguish, can kiss the rod that has smitten, and by the strength of sublime faith can still believe that the blow was dealt in love.

CHAPTER XXX.
CAUGHT IN THE STORM.

The sounds from the belfry of Glenathole church had just ceased, and the congregation were awaiting in reverential silence the entrance of their pastor, when the door of the building softly opened, and admitted the Errols. It was unusual for them to be so late, but the presence on this occasion of Mrs. Errol accounted for it, and looks of surprise were discernible on many a face as they watched the bent, infirm figure pass into the pew, where for many a long day its place had been vacant.

Well might their interest be awakened at the reappearance among them of one whom they had expected to see there no more. For during the three years that had elapsed since her son's death Mrs. Errol's life had hung in the balance. The shock which had supervened threatened to be fatal: and when at last she began to rally from it, fears were entertained that the remaining term of her existence would be only a living death. Nor were those fears altogether disarmed when afterwards she rose from her couch of suffering; she was but the wreck of her former self. Her mental powers were shattered; decrepitude showed itself in every movement of the once-active frame; and on her altered features there dwelt a shadow which only the light of Heaven would chase away.

Ever in her ears rang the sound of waves moaning a dirge over the grave of her fair boy. Day and night, alone or in company, it haunted her, the death-knell of joy and hope; and often, as she sat by the fire, they would observe her shudder as in mortal pain, and clench her hands convulsively, while from her lips escaped the low wail, "Oh! my son, my son!"

Mary's voice was never wanting at such times to whisper words of comfort; but, though the mother clung to the hope supplied from that last message they had received from their beloved dead, the horror investing his tragic fate had taken too deep a hold for any human power to unloose it. For a long time, indeed, it threatened to wreck her reason, and, but for the support of a God-given faith, probably would have done so. That voice, however, which calmed the tempest and bade the surging storm of human woe, saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further." Slowly and

painfully the broken-hearted woman struggled back to life; but for her life had lost all its interests: nothing seemed capable of arousing her from that deep lethargy of grief; and they saw with dismay that often she seemed totally unconscious of their presence, remaining for hours wrapped up in her own sad thoughts, and apparently dead to all around her.

It was long before she began to evince any symptoms of awakening interest in the affairs of daily life, and then only in the faintest degree. By-and-bye, as strength returned, this interest increased, and the old habits of unselfish consideration for others began to manifest themselves in feeble efforts to discharge some of the familiar duties, once her delight.

It is not in the first wild commotion of grief that its depth can be fathomed; but, when the tumult has subsided; when the grass has grown green on the grave where love's treasure was laid; and when the mourner has taken up once more the burden of life's cares and struggles, and gone back to the world again; then, if the sorrow be deep and heart-reaching, will it appear in that mysterious change produced by the dread agency of pain-a change all-pervading, though attested by no overt act or word. So, not until they saw their mother resume her place among them, did her children fully realise that her heart was broken. Her very effort to conceal it only made the truth more apparent, while investing all her actions with an interest strangely pathetic. There were times when the spectacle of patient devotion to duty affected Mary more than even her sufferings had done.

It was a characteristic circumstance, that the first thing which seemed really to take a hold on her attention, was the conviction that her daughter was sacrificing her own chances of happiness on her account. In vain Mary repudiated the idea; Mrs. Errol would not be persuaded, and she kept recurring to it, until Mary implored her not to mention such a thing again. Nevertheless, the mother did not relinquish it, but took the first opportunity of assuring her tried friend, Mr. Dunbar, that, as soon as his son found himself in a position to marry, Mary would be free to be his wife. The old man heartily concurred in the wish —a wish which had been his own for many a year; and declared that he would represent to Raymond

when next he came home, the advisability of terminating so long an engagement, and settling down in his native village as pastor to the people who had already expressed their united wish to this effect.

April was merging into May, however, before Raymond came. He arrived toward the close of the week, and in consequence of old Peggy's garrulous tongue, it soon became known that he was to supply his father's pulpit on the following Sabbath.

No sooner did this information reach Mrs. Errol's ears than she announced her intention of going to church next day to hear his sermon. Nor could any representations on the score of risk to herself dissuade her from this resolve. Accordingly, leaning on her son's arm, and attended by Mary, she set out when the church bells began to ring, and took her place once more in the familiar pew.

There was a hush of expectancy among the people, until the vestry-door opened, and the aged minister, followed by his son, slowly entered. Old Mr. Dunbar passed on to his own pew, while Raymond ascended to the pulpit.

A wave of colour passed over Mary Errol's face, as the young preacher's deep-toned and finely modulated voice rang among the arches; but when she could summon courage to regard him steadily for a moment, the flush faded, leaving her cheek pale; for never before had he looked so ill. Only six months had elapsed since their last meeting, but the change wrought in his appearance was such as she had been totally unprepared for.

Nor was it merely the external alteration that roused her apprehension: ere he had proceeded far in his discourse, she became aware of a more subtle change, the first intimation of which fell upon her heart with a deadly chill. What meant that strange rapture of spirit with which he dwelt upon those words: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness"? Whence came that mysterious sympathy with the great apostle of the Gentiles, who, at the close of his noble career, declared he had fought a good fight, and finished his course?

Instinctively she glanced from the speaker to his father, who sat listening with almost childlike intentness, as if he too were wondering at those eloquent words, which seemed not Raymond's, but those of the Spirit of the living God. Surely

his lips had been touched as with a live coal from off the altar whereon burns the sacred fire. Not otherwise could he so have stirred the hearts and consciences of his hearers that day. Without this divine inspiration, there may be eloquence, genius, erudition, or oratorical skill, but never the power to convince the conscience and change the life. That calls for a power not possessed by man; and such was the power making itself felt now among the worshippers.

When the service came to an end, many still lingered, evidently unwilling to leave the church until they had exchanged greetings with the young minister whom they expected to see permanently settled among them by-and-bye. Conspicuous amid the group of loiterers were the Douglases, who passed out from their pew just as Raymond left the pulpit.

Only one held aloof from the little band assembled there, and that was Harry Douglas. To him the presence of Raymond Dunbar in the pulpit that morning had been fraught with feelings of bitterness and rebellion. And when the others assembled to congratulate the preacher, he had stolen away, from utter inability to disguise his sentiments. For no mean spite toward his rival had any share in his abrupt withdrawal. But he was human; and never yet, save in the absurd imaginations of sentimentalists, did any human being prove adequate to the task of witnessing calmly, much less promoting the happiness of a rival.

Nor did he miscalculate his strength; for he could not have seen the meeting between Mary Errol and her affianced husband without a keen pang. Few words were spoken between them; but there was a language in Mary's expressive brown eyes which must have reminded him how wholly her affection was absorbed by the man of her choice.

"You never told me you had been ill," she said, reproachfully, as for a moment he walked by her side.

"I have not been ill—not seriously, I mean," he replied.

She turned upon him the full, honest gaze that ever defied evasion, then walked steadily on till their friends from the Castle took leave of them, and Raymond with his father prepared to do the same.

"I'll see you to-morrow," were Raymond's part-

ing words. "Perhaps you'll tell me then whether you were disappointed to-day or not."

The old tender smile accompanied the words; but Mary could not return it, for she seemed to have passed under the cold shadow of a cloud looming up from the bright horizon of love's promise.

When next morning he crossed the threshold of her home, looking bright and cheerful, her fears in a measure subsided; but she was glad when her mother, with a touch of her old humour, proceeded to lecture him on the apparently neglected duty of self-preservation.

"It's a' vera weel to be 'fervent in spirit,'" said she; "but that suirly doesna mean that we're to mak' martyrs o' oursel's needlessly. Do ye no think it wiser to husband your strength for a life o' service, than to fling it a' awa' in ae feckless endeavour to do mair than your Maker has gi'en ye strength to do? I've mony a time thocht, if good folk had just a wee mair sense, they wad do a hantel mair usefu' wark in the world. It's true, sir," she added, observing the smile on her auditor's face; "and I wish ye wad tak' it to heart."

Raymond promised to amend his ways according to her advice, and was about to speak on a more confidential topic, when Mary's entrance prevented it.

She was equipped for a walk, Raymond having asked her to accompany him, as the day was unusually warm, and he wished to be as much in the open air as possible. He seemed indeed to luxuriate in its freshness, often stopping to inhale the soft breeze from the ocean, as they wandered along its margin.

Mary's eyes were furtively scanning his face the while, and presently her anxious thoughts found utterance.

It was in vain he tried to parry her questions: quis fallere possit amantem? Ultimately he confessed that his health had been declining, though to what extent he did not say; perhaps he himself was not aware of it. And when he saw her alarm, he tried to reassure her by promises to be more careful during the next six months' absence from home.

For, notwithstanding his father's earnest solicitations, it was impossible, he said, to release himself from his engagement in London at present; but before the end of the year he hoped to be able to indulge his long-cherished wish of coming to reside permanently in Glenathole, and taking up his father's work there. Then there would be no longer any obstacle to their marriage. Mary should come and be mistress of the manse, dividing her time between it and the cottage, until, at least, Ronald's marriage (not an improbable event) left Mrs. Errol free to take up her abode with them.

The words were hopeful; yet Mary's sensitive mind detected an undercurrent of doubt and misgiving, as though the speaker entertained in secret a distrust of the happiness he portrayed. Something in the tones of his voice and in that strangely beautiful smile which seemed to be called forth by no earthly joy, revived the thrill of fear she had experienced in church the day previous. And when, after describing all those bright prospects, he added: "But, of course, Mary, we must leave the disposal of these things in God's hands: He knows what is best"; she burst into tears, unable to endure even the thought of another blow on her yet bleeding heart.

Surprised and grieved, Raymond strove to comfort her, assuring her her apprehensions regarding him were groundless, and repeating his promise to take fullest precautions in future against any recurrence of his former weakness. And, as if in practical proof of his assertion that he was quite equal to ordinary exertion, he proposed that they should take a row across the bay to Gull Island, some three miles distant, the sea being unusually calm, and the air balmy as on a midsummer's day.

Ashamed of having betrayed her feelings, and willing to believe them unwarranted, Mary, after some hesitation, assented to the proposal, and soon they were gliding over the placid water, Raymond plying the oars with all his customary dexterity, as in the days when they had all gone picnics together to Gull Island, before the cloud of sorrow had overshadowed their lives.

The scene around them, though familiar, had lost none of its beauty since then, and as they sped on toward their destination, both kept watching the various landmarks which one by one came into view. The distant hills to the east and west were veiled in a thick haze, but the village of Glenathole basked in the sunshine, and the abrupt, castellated peaks that flanked the bay sparkled as if bestudded with gems. Farther on to the left

towered the ruined walls of Raxley Castle, looming out against the sky in solemn, lonely grandeur. Gull Island lay ahead, forming a central object on the sea between the two ranges of hills on either side.

Toward this little island with its delapidated lighthouse, the boat slowly drifted. For the heat, which had become excessive, compelled the rower to relax his efforts. It was a relief, indeed, when at last they found themselves in a creek where they could anchor their craft, and rest for a while.

It was a bleak, desolate place, showing no green anywhere saving a few patches of coarse, stunted grass, with here and there a polypody fern in some crevice of the rock. The only inhabitants were the seals and bevies of the sca-birds which gave it its name. Yet on a calm day like this it was not unpleasant to rest there in the silence and solitude, and watch the sea sparkling all around and the seabirds sporting on its surface, while occasionally a vessel appeared on the horizon with all its canvas spread so as to catch what breeze was blowing.

Raymond seemed to enjoy it thoroughly, and, as he threw himself down on a flat rock beside Mary. he began to talk with more animation than he had vet displayed. He described the scene of his labours in the great metropolis, relating many a stirring incident that had come under his notice there, and disclosing in graphic language the lives and characters of the people whose welfare he wished to promote. To Mary his words were a revelation of things she had not even dreamt of; and in contrast with the darkness against which her lover was struggling, his own noble self-denial appeared the more striking in her eyes. before had she admired him so much: though so engrossed was he in his enthusiasm that he seemed utterly forgetful of his own part in the transactions to which he referred. Several times in the course of his narrative he betraved that strange rapture of spirit which had arrested her so forcibly when she listened to his preaching. She understood it now; and yet it seemed to place him on the threshold of that world where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, but where all are as the angels of God.

Silently she listened to his words, no audible moan testifying to the deep anguish of her soul, as it faced the dread possibility of a separation that might come sooner than either of them thought. He did not guess that while she sat caimly at his side, a prayer was going up from her heart for strength to say, "Thy will be done."

They had sat talking for about an hour, when a drop of rain that splashed upon his hand caused Raymond to look up. Great was his surprise to see the sky, so bright a little while since, now overshadowed with heavy black clouds moving slowly up from the sea toward the land.

"Ha! we must make haste, Mary," he said, starting to his feet, and assisting her to rise. "I don't like the appearance of those clouds. Just wait a moment till I unmoor the boat."

Quickly executing his purpose, he brought the boat up to the spot near which she stood, and, when she had stepped inside, he thrust it out from the creek with a few vigorous strokes, and made straight for the open sea.

The rain was beginning to fall more heavily, while the surface of the ocean had become ruffled by a breeze which presently died away again, as the shower increased. By-and-bye, from her place in the stern, Mary caught momentary glimpses of flashes of lightning among the dark clouds overhead, and could hear the ominous rumble of distant thunder. More and more frequent became the forked shafts of blue, electric fire; louder crashed the redoubled peals, and the rain descended in torrents.

Amid the fierce glare of the lightning, Mary could see her lover's face, as he rowed steadily and constantly onwards. It was unnaturally pale, but calm and resolute. He seemed unconscious of anything save the safe guidance of the boat which held a life more precious to him than his own. On he rowed over the waters illuminated every moment by the quivering flash, amid the angry growl of the thunder. Behind him he saw the waves rising in tumultuous heaps, and knew that soon the whole sea would be seething in foam. What would their chance of safety be should the frail craft in which they sat be overtaken by that wild squall?

Mary watched him pulling bravely on, every muscle strained in the effort; but to render aid was impossible: she could but sit motionless, trying to grasp the rudder, which was becoming more and more difficult, for already the furious waves were dashing themselves into the boat as if eager to swallow it and its occupants.

Once, as a larger billow than ordinary broke

over them, she saw Raymond grasp the oars with desperate energy, then bite his lips for a moment as if in acute pain; but the force of the breaker sent the boat on with a rush, and caused him to suspend rowing, till it rose again from the trough. It was then she saw an expression of alarm contract his features. He looked ahead: a mile and a half still lay between them and the shore. In that glance through the gathering gloom Mary read a mute appeal for help; and she observed with dismay that he was obliged to suspend his frantic efforts from time to time, and gasp for breath.

"Oh! Raymond, can I not help you?" she implored, anguish imprinted on her face.

"Don't move, Mary!" was his terrified response, as he once more resumed that awful wrestling with the elements.

In despair, she looked toward the land, which appeared no nearer than before; but, as her hungry gaze penetrated the mist of rain and spray, it suddenly brightened, and, with a joyous cry, she exclaimed:

"I see a boat coming toward us! Look, Raymond! there it is again!"

"Thank God!" was the low, fervent reply, as he struggled painfully on, his white, rigid countenance bearing testimony to the suffering it cost him.

But his efforts were becoming every instant more feeble, while the frail skiff was almost entirely at the mercy of the waves.

Meanwhile that other boat was slowly making its way over the foaming sea, and they could descry its two occupants, a man and a woman. At intervals they were completely lost to view, appearing again on the crest of the wave, its sport and plaything. On they came, rising and sinking, and sometimes beaten back, but still holding on to their course with a steadiness that proved them expert rowers.

Another half-hour of anxious suspense, and then, above the noise of the waves, came the voice of Bill Hardy, calling to them in heartening tones: "Ca' canny noo; I'll be alangside directly."

With joy they recognised the fisherman, whose herculean strength promised to come in good stead of their own failing efforts. Beside him, lustily pulling at the oar, was his daughter, her drenched garments clinging to her skin, and her redhair tossed wildly about in the blast. From the window of the cottage on the cliff she had seen the light craft overtaken by the storm, and, knowing the danger to its occupants, whom she had observed setting out in the forenoon, had summoned her father to man his own staunch boat and help in the rescue.

How that rescue was effected, Mary could not remember afterwards. She was conscious of nothing after that critical moment when the two boats lay alongside, and the strong hands of Bill Hardy and his daughter grasped the side of theirs. When she recovered consciousness, she found herself lying in the bottom of the fisherman's boat, her head leaning on Raymond's arm. The sound of breakers dashing on the rocks was in her ears, and she saw their preservers rowing with might and main toward the shore.

Soon the keel grated on the sand, where several people had assembled to welcome them, and assist Bill Hardy to pull up his boat out of reach of the threatening waves. Some of them waded in and steadied it, while its occupants prepared to disembark.

Raymond had risen to his feet, but a dizziness overpowered him, and he would have fallen back, had not the fisherman's brawny arm prevented it. He recovered almost immediately, however, and was turning to assist Mary ashore, when Meg Hardy interposed, saying, "I'll carry her in my arms, sir; dinna be fear'd, I'm acquent wi' the sea." And suiting the action to the word, she lifted Mary from the boat as if she had been a child, and went splashing through the water utterly regardless of her clothes, which, indeed, were already as wet as it was possible for them to be; never halting till she reached the firm strand.

Before Raymond could recover from his astonishment, he found himself similarly imprisoned in the resistless grasp of her father's strong arms, and borne likewise out of reach of the waves, which hissed at his feet, as though in baffled wrath at being disappointed of their prey.

A cheer rose from the little band around them, both for the rescued and the rescuers, and many a kindly offer of further help was made; but, on being assured that such would not be required, they slowly dispersed.

Bill Hardy and his daughter lingered to see

whether they could be of any service to Mr. Dunbar and Miss Errol, who could not find words wherewith to express their gratitude for their preservation from what now seemed certain death.

"Oh, dinna speak o' thanks, ma'am," said poor Meg. "It's but little I can do for a' the kindness ye showed to me at a time when naebody had onything to offer me but jibes and upbraidin'. Na, na; a wilder sea than that wadna hae keepit me, when ye were in peril; an' ye maunna say anither word, for after a' I did nae mair than I wad hae dune for ony puir body in distress." Then, glancing apprehensively at Raymond Dunbar, who was engaged in earnest conversation with her father, she added in a whisper: "I doot Maister Dunbar'll be nane the better o' this: he looks sair dune."

A quiver of pain passed over Mary Errol's face at those last words, spoken in real kindness, yet conveying a terrible meaning to her. She followed the girl's glance, and saw that the fear she had expressed was only too well warranted.

Her lover was evidently battling with pain, despite his efforts to conceal it. White to the lips, he stood beside his preserver, endeavouring as best he could to utter his deep-felt gratitude—gratitude to which the poor lawless character before him, who had so often risked his life in less commendable enterprises, allowed himself no claim.

"Hoots!" he said, "ye needna thank me: I've gane oot mony a time in a waur storm than this to fetch in my creels. I'm jist vexed I didna see ye gaun awa', for I could hae telt ye a squall was comin'.—But, sir, ye sude gang awa' hame, for ye're drookit to the skin, and the warst o' the storm's no by yet. The suner Miss Errol's hame, the better,"

"Yes, you're right, Hardy," replied Mr. Dunbar; "I must get her home before that ominous cloud bursts yonder.—Mary," he called, "you must hasten home; Hardy says the worst of the storm has yet to come; and Mrs. Errol will be very anxious."

As he spoke the words, the tall figure of Betsy Heron came in sight. She was striding along in defiance of the wind, her garments whisking wildly about her, and her shawl tightly clutched under her chin. In one arm she carried a bundle, which, as she approached, proved to be wraps for her young mistress. Fortunately, neither she nor Mrs. Errol was aware of the danger from which they had just been delivered; but when she saw their

drenched condition, the old servant cried in consternation:

"Oh! my grief! whaur hae ye been, Miss Mary? An', Maister Dunbar,—eh, sirs! but ye're sair forfoughten! Come awa' hame afore ye get ony mair rain, for ye're jist clashin."

"I'm coming, Betsy," replied Mary, as two plaids were thrown round her. Then turning to her lover. she said: "Raymond, you must go home. I entreat you to do it."

The look of mingled alarm and grief that accompanied the words compelled him to yield to her request; but, ere he parted from her, he said, with assumed cheerfulness:

"I will exact compensation for this unceremonious dismissal to-morrow."

"Raymond, tell me the truth," she pleaded, tears starting to her eyes; "are you suffering much pain?"

Truth forbade a denial; though he took care to assure her he would recover as soon as he got rested.

The Hardys and Betsy Heron had withdrawn in animated conversation, during the course of which full details of the recent perilous adventure were given to the horrified domestic.

The tears came streaming down Mary Errol's cheeks as she read the traces of suffering in the face that, for her, held all the beauty in the world. Again the thrill of apprehensive anguish darted through her, and, wringing the hand he had ex-

tended, she cried: "Oh! for my sake, get well! My life is bound up in yours."

Never to the close of her life did Mary Errol forget the smile these words awakened: lips could not have uttered language so eloquent. It told of love unutterable, indestructible—a love that bade defiance even to death itself. It seemed to chide the wild rebellion rising up in her heart, and woo that heart to acquiescence in the will of Him who "does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men."

She dared not murmur in presence of a faith like his; she could but pray: "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

Ah! could she have seen what occurred when they had parted, how had that prayer died on her lips!

Leaning for support against a rock, her lover stood, his hands pressed to his side in an agony that brought great beads of sweat upon his brow. Another moment, and a red stream issued from his mouth, dyeing to its own hue the handkerchief with which he tried to staunch it. Well he knew it was his life-blood that was oozing away; that in this form had come the summons to prepare himself for the last journey of his earthly pilgrimage; yet amid the first, keen pangs of his anguish, a love greater than any human love enabled him to bow in resignation to the stroke, and the hand which had guided him hitherto made itself more firmly felt than ever, now that he seemed on the threshold of the "Valley of the Shadow of Death."

(To be continued.)



By EDWIN OLIVER.

O atmosphere has changed more completely than that of the Club: formerly all its brilliance came from its members; now it is dependent on the upholsterer. Whether mahogany and marble are the natural antidotes of wit and wisdom, I will leave to the metaphysical to decide, but it is a fact that smartness has left the conversation in favour of the appoint-Most who are used to club-life will admit that with increasing magnificence has grown up a deeper monotony. One passes up palatial staircases, where liveried flunkeys vie with the birds of Venus in point of utility; into endless gilded rooms, where one becomes exasperated with the chaos of periodical literature and the comfort of the lounges; and finally goes home or to the theatre to be amused. Not even in the best Bohemian clubs is one startled by the play of wit. When the lucky man of letters strikes upon an original gem, he jealously guards it as a thing of price; only to the phlegmatic compositor does he entrust it until the laws of copyright have stamped his claim to paternity. In fact, few would agree nowadays with the saving of Dr. Johnson: "Sir, the great chair of a full and pleasant London club is, perhaps, the throne of human felicity." Then a hard settle and a sanded floor were the sole attractions, yet sufficient to inspire half the immortal epigrams of our language. Men were not so blase or cynical; they were content to meet in simple fashion, and give their best to the "feast of reason and the flow of soul." The coffee-house, a century ago, was an important factor of London life-the place to be seen at, to meet the leading lights of the day, where the noble patrons mingled with the masters of the higher arts. Of course, the names of these clubs are legion; it is only possible in a single article to refer to a few that have particularly noteworthy associations attached to them.

No paper on clubs would be complete without a substantial tribute to the father of them—the first and, I may say, the most famous of all. The



Apollo Club belongs to the golden age of Elizabeth, when were gathered together such a brilliant cluster of immortal names as modern history can scarcely match. Beneath the quaint sign of "The Devil," whereon St. Dunstan was seen tweaking the nose of his Satanic Majesty, met nightly the great William himself, rare old Ben, Kit Marlowe, Greene, Nash, and the many others who shed lustre on England's renaissance.

The old tavern stood next to the banking-house of Childs', by whom it was bought and demolished in 1788. Some interesting relies of the club are still to be seen in the present premises of the firm, among which is the same bust of the Sun-god that used to look down upon the festive scenes from its place above the

door. The ruling spirit and President was Jonson himself, who formulated the well-known rules, commencing:—

"Let none but guests and clubbers hither come; Let dunces, fools, and sordid men keep home; Let learned, civil, merry men b' invited, And, modest, too; nor be choice liquor slighted. Let nothing in the treat offend the guest; More for delight than cost prepare the feast."

Should not the last line be writ in golden letters on the walls of our modern functions? The laws go on to proscribe topics serious and sacred; likewise the admission of wandering minstrels. Discussions must be to the point, and the wit must be "without reflection." Quarrelling and horseplay were sternly forbidden, although "laughing, leaping, danc-

ing, jests, and songs," were to be the attractions on festive occasions. Members who betrayed the sacred rites of the club were liable to expulthe wine of last night hurt you, drink more today, and it will cure you."

Two occasions connected with the club show



sion. Unfortunately, some of the axioms of Apollo were not so estimable, as, for instance, the advice written over the kitchen clock:-" If

dolph had found the allurements of London too costly for his pocket; penniless, and out at elbow, he resolved that his

last night should be dedicated to the Apollo, despite the obstacles of having neither money nor invitation. His white face soon caught the roving eye of Jonson, who bellowed to him: "Come in, John Bo-peep." His shabby clothes at once became the butt for the squibs and doggerel of the assembled company, and the choice was given him of either making an impromptu verse or of ordering a quart of sack. The exigencies of his pocket were instantly responsible for the following lines:—

"I, John Bo-peep, and you four sheep,
With each one his good fleece;
If, that you are willing to give me a shilling,
'Tis fifteen pence apiece.'

Ben was delighted. "By——," he thundered, "I believe this is my son Randolph." Henceforth he was made free of the premises. On another evening a stranger from the country

was enlarging offensively on the extent of his landed possessions. This unpardonable breach of taste was too much for the President, who finally exploded as follows: "What signify to us your dirt and your clods? Where you have an acre of land, I have ten acres of wit." "Have you so, good Mr. Wiseacre?" was the reply; then a companion chimed in: "Why now, Ben, you seem to be quite stung." "I' faith," answered Jonson, "I never was so pricked by a hobnail before."

Among the other noteworthy personages connected with the "Devil" may be mentioned mine host, Simon Wadloe, who died in 1627, and whose name has been preserved in Squire Western's favourite ditty, "Old Sir Simon the King"; also John Cottington, otherwise "Mull Sack," who from the humble position of sweep gained distinction in the more gentlemanly calling of highwayman. It was in the stormy days of the Civil Wars, and he made capital out of both parties with strict impartiality, being able to boast of having stripped both the Iron Protector and the Merry Monarch. His portrait is embellished with some descriptive verse ending with the following couplet:—

"I sing, dance, drink, and merrily pass the day, And, like a chimney, sweep all care away."

After the Restoration, the tavern became mainly a resort for the legal profession, although such figures as Addison, Steele, and the much-abused Colley Cibber were to be seen there. An epigram on the latter says:—

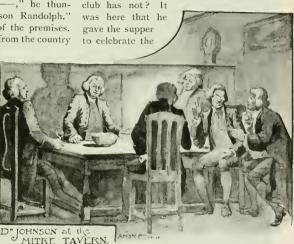
"When laureates make odes, do you ask of what sort?

Do you ask if they're good or are evil?

You may judge: from the 'Devil' they come to the Court,

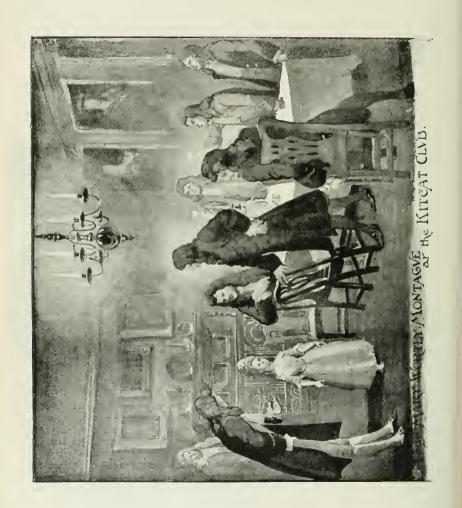
And go from the Court to the 'Devil.'"

Of course, the Apollo has its particular reminiscences of Dr. Johnson, but then what



appearance of Mrs. Lennox's novel, "The Life of Harriet Stuart"; when the hot apple-pie of Gargantuan proportions was appropriately garnished with bay leaves, and when he himself placed a laurel crown upon the fair writer's brow. "About 5 A.M.," says Sir John Hawkins, "Johnson's face shone with meridian splendour, though his drink had been only lemonade; but the far greater part of the company had deserted the colours of Bacchus, and were with difficulty rallied to partake of a second refreshment of coffee, which was scarcely ended when the day began to dawn."

Another old inn associated with the great lexicographer was the Mitre. It also stood



next to, and was demolished by, a banking house, viz., Hoare's. Shakespeare's name is also attached to it, for in the manuscript poems of a contemporary bard, Richard Jackson, may be found "Shakespeare's rime, which he made at ye 'Mitre' in Fleet Street," beginning "From the rich Lavinian shore." The faithful Boswell's narrative is replete with allusions to this tavern; the first supper which cemented the life-friendship with the doctor was held there, when the disciple's open admiration proved irresistible. "Give me your hand," said Johnson; "I have taken a fancy to you." At the Mitre he cut short a Scotch gentleman's eulogy on the scenery of the North by remarking: "Sir, let me tell you that the noblest prospect that a Scotchman ever sees is the high road that leads him to England." It has been truly said that Johnson "had the coat but not the heart of a bear," for many loving traits are told of him to put against these crude brusqueries. As "Goldy" said of him in this very hostel, when alluding to some profligate protégé, "He is now become miserable, and that insures the protection of Johnson." Before passing on to the clubs most closely connected with the author of "Rasselas," let us digress briefly in favour of the immortal coterie of an earlier generation.

The Kit-Kat Club was held at the sign of "The Trumpet," a tavern in Shire Lane, and owed its name to its original owner, a pastrycook yelept Christopher Kat. The meetings at first had a political significance, being held by Whig patriots to discuss the security of the Protestant succession when the star of William of Orange was waning. The average list of members numbered about forty, the nobility being represented by the Duke of Marlborough, Lords Dorset and Halifax, and Sir Robert Walpole; the arts by Addison, Steele, Congreve, and Sir Godfrey Kneller. The Spectator and Tatler are replete with the smart sayings of these wits. Thus we learn how the courtly Addison required so much wine to loosen his gravity, that poor good-natured Steele was always intoxicated before the golden epigrams began to flow. Among the pleasant customs of the club was that of electing annually some Queen of Beauty, who should be the mark for the gallant toasts and bursts of poesy of the members. Perhaps

the best of these *jeux d'esprit* is that from the brain of Lord Halifax upon the "Little Whig" (as Lady Sunderland was called):—

"All nature's charms in Sunderland appear, Bright as her eyes and as her reason clear; Yet still their force, to man not safely known, Seems undiscovered to herself alone."

The object of this effusion was one of the four daughters of Marlborough, the other three, the ladies Godolphin, Bridgewater, and Monthermer, being also recipients of these laudatory distinctions. In connection with these beauty competitions, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu tells a pretty incident. It was the evening for the election of a fair one, when her father, the Duke: of Kingston, boldly wagered little Mary, them eight years old, against all the matured charms: they could bring against her. To prove his choice he instantly sent a chaise to bring her to the meeting. The sight of the childish beauty was infectious: they elected her without a dissentient voice. The company rose to drink her health, solemnly kissed her and feasted her with sweetmeats, then perpetuated her name on a goblet with a diamond. She says herself: "Pleasure was too poor a word to express my sensations. They amounted to ecstasy. Never again throughout my whole life did I pass so happy an evening."

I would there were space to tell all the delightful stories that have come down to us anent Steele and the Kit-Kat. A characteristic anecdote is that where, at the anniversary of the King, he and Addison entertained Bishop Hoadley, of Bangor. Presently entered the tipsy but enthusiastic hatter, John Sly, who drank the royal health on his knees. The jest was received in injured silence, but kindly Dicky whispered to his clerical friend, "Do laugh; it is humanity to laugh." However, the outraged prelate took his departure, and Steele fell under the table. The next morning he penned the following coneiliatory couplet to the Bishop (who, of course, forgave him, as everyone else had to) :-

"Virtue with so much ease on Bangor sits,
All faults he pardons, though he none commits."

The "Grecian" was another club frequented by the same brilliant company. It was situated



outside to finish the

dispute with

their swords.

Addison also

speaks in the

Spectator of the exaggerated im-

portance of these

legal striplings.

The club was

in Devereux Court, and was distinguished by its character for scholarship, as "White's" was for its gallantry, and "Will's" for its poetry. Dr. King tells us how the young Templars would wrangle over the correct accent of a Greek word. and would adjourn

started by a Greek from the Levant, who, about the year of the Great Fire, advertised his coffee, chocolate, and tea, by offering gratuitous instruction in the preparation of these beverages. Akenside used to alternate of a night between the "Grecian" and "Tom's." Sir John Hawkins describes him here as "entangled in disputes and altercations, chiefly on subjects of literature and politics, that fixed on his character the stamp of haughtiness and self-conceit, and drew him into disagreeable situations."

All readers of Boswell will remember the references to "The Club." This was a genuine Johnsonian creation. The great doctor and Sir Joshua founded it in 1746, the early membership being extremely exclusive, and extended to only a dozen or so. Even Goldsmith was objected to by Sir John Hawkins as being merely a literary hack, but he finally came in as a naturalist on the strength of his "Animated Nature"! The company included, besides the above-mentioned, Burke, Gibbons, Garrick, Boswell, and Dr. Burney, Mrs, Piozzi tells us that Johnson had a passionate regard for the "Literary Club" (as it was renamed after Garrick's death), so long as it was restricted to his particular friends; but as soon as its circle became widened and "took off from his confidence in the company," he withdrew his patronage, and stigmatised it as "a mere dinner club." The earlier meetings were held at "The Turk's Head," in Soho, the members assembling once a week, at seven o'clock, for supper; it was afterwards removed to Sackville Street. The centenary celebration of "The Johnson Club" (its latest name) was held at the Clarendon Hotel in 1864, when Dean Milman took the chair, and the "Father of the Club," Lord Brougham, made a special journey from the South of France, in order to be present. A very distinguished gathering of peers. Church dignitaries, and celebrities, did honour to the occasion.

Russell Street, Covent Garden, was the scene of three of the most celebrated coffee-houses, "Will's," "Button's," and "Tom's." It was to the first that the infant Pope begged to be carried, in order to obtain a glimpse of his great predecessor, Dryden. As our friend the Doctor himself says: "Who does not wish that Dryden could have known the value of the homage that

was paid him, and foreseen the greatness of his young admirer?" To the older poet's preference was due the pre-eminence of "Will's"; it became the centre of all the wit and brilliance of the day. The entrée to it was at once a mark of assured success and the envy of those ephemeral stars whom the Spectator jeers at as coming to the Coffee-house "upon the merit of having writ a posie of a ring." The nobility were not slow to follow, for Defoe speaks of the blue and green ribbons, and the stars sitting in familiar converse with the peers of the pen. Dryden, as an old man, had his particular seat, which was called his Winter Chair, and was moved out to the balcony for him in warm weather. Colley Cibber speaks of him then "as a decent old man, the arbiter of critical disputes at 'Will's.'" At the great poet's death, Addison drew the fashion to "Button's," across the road, the

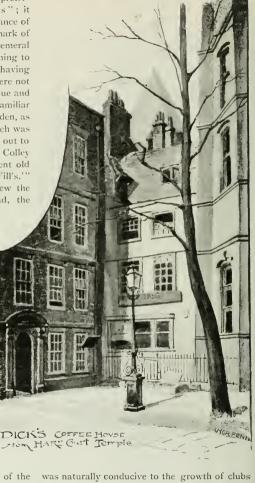
proprietor of which had been a servant of his wife, the Countess of Warwick. Mr. Spectator would retire here when wounded by the frequent encounters with his titled spouse; and here Ambrose Philips hung up the celebrated rod, with which he threatened to chastise Pope. The famous Lion's Head was erected at this club by the founder of the Guardian, through the open mouth of which young and inexperienced writers were invited to post their MSS. Under it was placed Martial's couplet:—

"Curvantur magnis iste cervicibus ungues; Non nisi dilecta pascitur iste ferâ."

"Tom's," at 17, Russell Street, held its own for over a century as a haunt of "smart" people, where "there was playing at piquet and the best of conversation till midnight."

On the balcony would gather members of the Upper House of an afternoon to drink tea and be amused. In the latter half of the last century, an important club of six hundred members was held here, including such extreme elements as the Dukes of Northumberland and Montague, Lords Rodney and Clive, Garrick, Foote, Johnson, and Goldsmith.

The literary atmosphere of Paternoster Row



was naturally conducive to the growth of clubs in the neighbourhood. Quite a thriving group of them encircled St. Paul's Churchyard; there was Child's Coffee-house, patronised by solemn proctors and clergy, where Addison came to study types, and laugh at the countryman who mistook everyone in a scarf for a doctor of divinity. There was the St. Paul's Coffee-house, and Paul's Head, where Dr. Rawlinson's great



collection of books was sold after dinner. There was also the club at the Queen's Arms, where Garrick attended in order to popularise himself with the City, and to gauge their tastes. Johnson founded another club at this tavern, at which he stipulated that the members should not be "patriotic"; indeed, Boswell describes them as "very sensible, well-behaved men." But more famous than all of these was the "Chapter," with its low-panelled rooms and heavy beams. In the north-east box of the coffee-room met nightly the "Wittenagemot," as the noisy little

group of wits termed themselves; then, in this same room, there was the "Wet-Paper

Club," whose object was to devour the morning journals as they arrived damp from the machine. There are also some pitiable memories of poor Chatterton.

Thus the starving boy, too proud to acknowledge his failure, writes to his family: "I am quite familiar at the Chapter Coffee-house, and know all the geniuses there." At another time he speaks of a gentleman at the "Chapter" who promised to recommend him as travelling tutor to the young Duke of Northumberland: "but, alas! I spoke no tongue but my own," Goldsmith had a special chair here, which until lately was one of the " show " possessions of the house. It is told how he sat down to dinner with Lloyd and other needy scribblers, and finding himself the only one with any money, had to settle for them all.

I cannot close this paper without a short notice of three more famous names in London Clubland. The first is "Nando's," which occupied the garish-looking house in Fleet Street, erroneously styled "The Palace of Henry VIII. and Cardinal

Wolsey." The only reason for this mistake is the fact that it is probably the house that the great churchman ordered Sir Amyas Paulet to build, in revenge for the knight having caused Wolsey, when a parish priest, to be put in the stocks. "Nando's" was the scene of Chancellor Thurlow's first step on the ladder of success. He had been arguing hotly about some legal case of the day, unconscious of the fact that some lawyers were among his audience; the latter were so pleased with his powers of oratory that the next day they appointed him

junior counsel. How he utilised his opportunity is part of history.

"Dick's" is another name to arouse memories with. It was situated at No. 8, Fleet Street, and is indelibly coupled with the sad story of Cowper. The melancholy poet, when first attacked by his malady, read in a paper there a letter which he considered specially designed to drive him to self-destruction. He, therefore, departed to attempt first hanging with a garter, and then the surer method of drowning. Happily, both efforts were ineffectual.

I have left the "Cheshire Cheese" to the last because it still remains to us a cherished relic of old Grub Street, lying back in its dingy little court, just as when "Goldy" haunted its bar and wrote, hard by, his history of Olivia. Sala has admirably described it in these words:

"It is a little lop-sided, wedged-up house, that always reminds you, structurally, of a highshouldered man with his hands in his pockets. It is full of holes, and corners, and cupboards, and sharp turnings; and, in ascending the stairs to the tiny smoking-room, you must tread cautiously if you do not wish to be tripped up by plates and dishes momentarily deposited there by furious waiters." Things have stood still at the "Cheese" for more than a century; the same high-backed settles, the same sawdusted floor, the same simple chop and "Rotheram steak," and last, but not least, the same "Cheddar" pudding on Saturdays. Yes; shut up in one of those time-worn boxes, you get a better eighteenth-century flavour for a shilling than the Bodleian will give you in a twelvemonth.





MODERN GREEK SONGS.

IFE seems like an opera amongst the modern Greeks: all emotions, all events require the relief of singing. But a marriage is a singing time among human beings as well as birds. Among the Greeks the youth of both sexes are kept apart, and do not meet except on the occasion of some public feast, when the young Greek makes choice of his bride, and asks her parents for their consent. If they give it, all is arranged for their betrothal; but the young people are not allowed to see each other until that event. There are parts of Greece where the young man is allowed to declare his passion himself to the object of it; not in words, however, does he breathe his tender suit. He tries to meet her in some path or other place in which he may throw her an apple or a flower. If the former missile be chosen, one can only hope that the young lady is apt at catching, as a blow from a moderately hard apple is rather too violent a token of love. After this apple or flower-throwing, his only chance of meeting with his love is at the fountain, to which all Greek maidens go to draw water, as Rebekah went of old to the well. The ceremony of betrothal is very simple. On an appointed evening the relations of the lovers meet together in the presence of a priest, either at the house of the father of the future husband, or at that of the parents of the bride elect. After the marriage contract is signed, two young girls bring in the affianced maiden-who is covered all over with a veil-and present her to her lover, who takes her by the hand, and leads her up to the priest. They exchange rings before him, and he gives them his blessing. The bride then retires; but all the rest of the company remain, and spend the day in merrymaking and drinking the health of the young couple. The interval between the betrothal and the marriage may be but a few hours; it may be

months, and it may be years; but, whatever the length of time, the lovers must never meet again until the wedding-day comes. Three or four days before that time, the father and mother of the bride send round their notes of invitation, each of which is accompanied by the present of a bottle of wine. The answers come in with even more substantial accompaniments. Those who have great pleasure in accepting send a present with their reply; the most frequent is a ram or lamb dressed up with ribbons and flowers; but the poorest send their quarter of mutton as their contribution to the wedding feast.

On the eve of the marriage, or rather during the night, the friends on each side go to deck the bride and groom for the approaching ceremony. The bridegroom is shaved by his paranymph, or groom's man, in a very grave and dignified manner, in the presence of all the young ladies invited. Fancy the attitude of the bridegroom, anxious and motionless under the hands of his unpractised barber, his nose held lightly up between a finger and thumb, while a crowd of young girls look gravely on at the graceful operation! The bride is decked, for her part, by her young companions, who dress her in white, and cover her all over with a long veil made of the finest stuff. Early the next morning the young man and all his friends come forth, like a bridegroom out of his chamber, to seek the bride, and carry her off from her father's house. Then she, in songs as ancient as the ruins of the old temples that lie around her, sings her sorrowful farewell to the father who has cared for her and protected her hitherto: to the mother who has borne her and cherished her; to the companions of her maidenhood; to her early home; to the fountain whence she daily fetched water; to the trees which shaded her childish play; and every now and then she

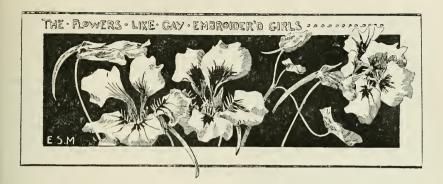
gives way to natural tears; then, according to immemorial usage, the paranymph turns to the glad yet sympathetic procession, and says, in a sentence which has become proverbial on such occasions: "Let her alone! she weeps!" to which she must make answer: "Lead me away, but let me weep!" After the cortege has borne the bride to the house of her husband, the whole party adjourn to church, where the religious ceremony is performed. Then they return to the dwelling of the bridegroom, where they all sit down and feast, except the bride, who remains veiled, standing alone, until the middle of the banquet, when the paranymph draws near, unlooses the veil, which falls down, and she stands blushing, exposed to the eves of all the guests. The next day is given up to the performance of dances peculiar to a wedding. The third day the relations and friends meet together and lead the bride to the fountain. from the waters of which she fills a new earthen vessel, and into which she throws various provisions. They afterwards dance in circles round the fountain.

The character of the marriage song is tender, yet gay and hopeful; but the character of the "Myriologia," or funeral songs, is altogether despairing and sad. When a man dies, his wife, his mother, and his sisters, all come up to the poor motionless body, and softly close the eyes and the mouth. Then they leave the house, and go to that of a friend, where they dress in white, as if for some glad nuptial occasion; with this sole difference, that their hair is allowed to flow dishevelled and uncovered. Other women are busy with the corpse while they change their dress in a neighbour's house. The body is dressed in the best clothes the dead possessed; and it is then laid on a low bed with the face uncovered, and turned towards the East; while the arms lie peacefully crossed on the breast. When all these preparations have been made, the relations return to the house of mourning; leaving the door open, so that all who wish once more to gaze on the face of the departed may enter in. All who come, range themselves around the bed, and weep and cry aloud without restraint. As soon as they are a little calmer someone begins to chant the "Myriologia"-a custom common to the ancient Hebrews, as well as to the more modern Irish with their "keenes" and their plaintive enumeration of the goods, and blessings, and love which the deceased possessed in this world which he has left. In the mountains of Greece, the nearest and dearest among the female relations first lifts up her voice in the "Myriologia"; she is followed by others, either sisters or friends.

It is the exclusive right of women to sing the "Myriologia." The men bid farewell to their companion and friend in a few simple words of prose, kissing the mouth of the deceased ere they leave. But two centuries ago, among the mountains of Greece, the shepherds sang the "Myriologia" over each other.

There are no beggars in Greece or the islands of the Archipelago, excepting the blind; all others would think it shame to live by alms, with their blue and sunny sky above them, and their fertile soil beneath their feet. But the blind are a privileged class; they go from house to house, receiving a ready welcome at each, for they are wandering minstrels, and have been so ever since Homer's time. Some of them have learnt by heart an immense number of songs; and they all know a large collection. Their memory is their stock-intrade, their means of living, They never stay long in one place, but traverse Greece from end to end, and have a wonderful knack in adapting their choice of songs to the character of the inhabitants of the place where they chant them. They generally prefer the simple villagers as audience, to the more sophisticated townspeople; and, in the towns, they hang about the suburbs rather than enter into the busy streets in the centre. They know half by experience, half by instinct, that the most ignorant half of a population is always the least questioning; and the most susceptible of impression. The Turks stalk past these blind minstrels with the most supreme and unmoved indifference; but the Greeks welcome them affectionately, particularly at those village feasts which are called paneghyris, and which would fall as flat as Hamlet without the part of Hamlet, if there were not several blind singers present. They accompany themselves on the lyre, a five stringed instrument, played with a bow.

These minstrels are divided into two sets; those who merely remember what they have learnt from others, and those who compose ballads of their own, in addition to their stores of memory. In fact, these blind beggars are the novelists and the historians of modern Greece.



SNUBBING A SAPPHO.

By E. Spicer-Jay.

" M Y dear boy, 1 really ——"
" Oh, darling, you must." He gave her an insinuating little kiss on the faded pink of her soft check.

"I do want to jump upon Jones. He's such a beastly young cad. Says that nothing can be funny unless it's—it's—oh—nasty, you know. And you can do it so well if you like."

"Well, dear——" She paused. The boy was very dear to her; son of the twin brother of the lover of her youth, whose half-gay, half-sad fascinations he seemed to inherit. She saw, as the tender imagination of a yearning heart sees, in his young, clear cheek, quick hazel eye, and eager smile a faint image of the romantic, reckless captain of an Indian Frontier regiment, on whose distant grave thirty Eastern sunsets had flushed and faded.

There was not really much likeness, but the boy was a good, healthy-minded boy in the main; and though his little requests occasionally, at the first blush, shocked her, Miss Medora Carteret usually complied with them in the end.

She had been an old maid, or, as she said, with a little smile and a pensive look, a "widow," since she was seventeen. The halo of her youth's romance clung about her in gentle smiles and tears; so that even this pre-

sent awakened generation of young folks venerated her with a love that made her as easy to confide in as a patron saint.

She lived in a cathedral town, in a little house close to the cathedral—a house, like herself, a treasure-place of bright and tender memories—like herself, a little prim, with a delicate fragrance of immortal maidenhood.

She was given to good works—a young women's meeting, a boys' class. She gave her mite in all "Parish Work," and was in the best cathedral society. But not so cathedral that she did not, at times, show her grey and brown silks and sober lace headgear in the principal Nonconformist sanctuaries.

A little timidity mingled with all she did till the subject or the thing ran away with the timidity. She hated being a public character.

In the spring of her youth, the blossom of hope, she had "written" a little, with a mild success. Then came the blow that rent her life—business, death, care for sick and poor relatives; but just of late she was timorously trying again.

Master Dick Abinger knew it; he believed in her profoundly, admiring with absolute blindness everything she read him. Hence the present difficulty.

"Look here, Aunt Dora, I'll explain again. This fellow Jones says nobody can write a comic song with any 'go' in it that isn't—well—what one wouldn't like one's sister to sing. And I said we were made to laugh as well as to cry; and be harmlessly funny. So I want you to shut him up by writing some jolly sort of a jingle that's perfectly innocent."

Miss Medora blushed, and remonstrated a little, and said that as for herself she only sang Handel, and hymns, and—with a far-away look—one or two little things she used to sing, and she disliked comic songs; but finally she consented, and the song was written. It was perfectly harmless, and, as might be expected, not specially witty.

But Dick found in it a crushing argument, and was profuse in his thanks. It was on the well-worn subject of the British Mother-in-Law. One verse, perhaps, could be quoted to show the simplicity of the muse:—

"No silver stream murm'ring through valleys and dykes Can whisper so sweetly, that is, when she likes. When the wife and she quarrel, I view it with awe, And always take part with my mother-in-law. My mother-in-law, O whisper it low, and speak it with awe,

My warlike, implacable mother-in-law."

After it had been shown to Jones, who admitted that it was "all right," but did not, as the ardent Dick expected, entreat a copy, it was put away in a big, old desk with other compositions of Miss Carteret's.

Dick was reading for the army, All Dick's family went into the army, as all Miss Medora's had done.

At intervals he came to report himself, and to join in the youthful sports of Minchester, as football and cricket.

Miss Medora begged him not to go to balls and theatres from *her* house.

"I don't say, my dear," she murmured, "it's a sin; but, you know, I'm Evangelical. And, oh, I hope, Dick, you'll get a taste for better things."

Dick said he had a decided taste for the best thing he knew—his Aunt Dora at which she shook her head, but was pleased. There was an aroma of the past in some of Dick's sweet sayings. She looked forward to re-living her past in Dick's first sweetheart.

One day he came to see her, looking rather

preoccupied; which she, being preoccupied also, did not notice.

When they were seated at afternoon tea, with fragile Indian china cups of price between them, and hyacinths scenting the room, she said, rather shyly:

"Dick, I want you to do something for me, but it's quite a secret. You must know, dear, that I've lost money; a cousin of mine persuaded but it doesn't matter—I'm sure he meant it kindly. And you know when I was a girl, I used to be paid—O, quite generously—for poems and tales. So I thought—"

"Oh, yes!" said Dick, nearly smashing his cup in his eagerness to set it down. "Let's send some more—where to, though? 'The Quarterly?' 'Cornhill?' I know. We'll send the 'Mother-in-Law'! Won't they think it stunning!"

"My dear!" said Miss Carteret, scandalised, "you make me feel quite hot." She put her hand to her cheek. "But let us be serious. You know I have by me some—some verses, and a tale, at least." Miss Medora stammered a little, she was always bashful about her literary attempts. "Well, you know the Dean—Dean Oriel?"

"I know," said the irreverent Dick, who did not intend irreverence, "the jolly old patriarch who—"

"Oh, hush, dear, 'our spiritual pastors and masters'; you've forgotten your Catechism."

"No, I haven't," said Dick. "What's your name, N or M?—which it isn't. But I know the Dean. Does he write comic songs?"

Miss Medora shook her delicate finger reprovingly.

"The Dean," she said, "writes admirably himself; and his son-in-law is editor of——" and she named a well-known Church Magazine. "Of course, I only know him slightly, but we know about each other, and I have worked under him on charity committees, so I thought——"

"Send 'em to him," cried Dick; "what a whacking good plan! Won't he like them! Let me do it, I should so enjoy it; and I'll take them round this very evening."

"Well," said Miss Medora, faintly, "I should

like his opinion. Of course, I don't suppose he would——"

"He'll have absolutely no taste if he doesn't," interpolated Dick,

"Would accept them. At any rate, not at first. But he would see, I hope," she added, with modest pride, "that I write like a lady, and a Christian."

Dick hugged her boisterously, and instantly required to know where he should find the MS. and large envelopes.

"In that desk, dear. But we'd better have candles first. Dear me, there's a ring; I suppose it's Mrs. Hodge come for the beef-tea for her sick child. I must go and speak to her for a minute. You might put those verses you liked, 'The Meadow in Spring,' in an envelope, and then we can consult together what I had best say in a note."

When she returned from the tearful confidences of Mrs. Hodge, Dick had got everything ready, and, pen in hand, was prepared to write the note from her dictation.

She observed, however, that he seemed a little pensive; but he shook it off, and the note was written—a modest, lady-like little note, requesting the Dean's opinion of the enclosed, and adding that Miss Medora would be only too glad, should the verses be thought worthy of insertion in the ____, or any other periodical in which the Dean was interested.

Dick wrote it in his best hand, and himself delivered it to the Dean's butler, with an intimation that it was "awfully important."

"Do you know much of Miss Carteret?" said the Dean to Mrs. Dean that evening. "Of course, I've met her, but—h'm——" he left his sentence unfinished.

"Not a great deal; but she is very intimate with the Ponsfords. She always seemed to me a quiet, ladylike sort of person."

"There's a little peculiarity sometimes, I think, about single ladies," the Dean murmured. "I should certainly not have imagined—" The conversation drifted into other channels,

When a week had elapsed, Miss Carteret's fifty-year-old heart experienced all the tremors of fifteen when the bell rang; also, when she met the Dean she cast down her eyes and blushed, and wondered. On the eighth day,

Dick being with her again, a large envelope was brought in. Dick snatched it from the waiter, while she sat perfectly still, faltering under her breath, "The Dean."

Dick opened it excitedly. He was so long over both MS, and accompanying note, that at last she held out her hand with an impatience to which she was not given.

This was the Dean's note, written with great neatness, and after some slight embarrassment:—

"Dear Miss Carteret,—I return your verses, in which there is certainly some talent, but which are scarcely suited to the tone of any periodical I could influence. Nor could I quite consistently countenance the wholesale disparagement of a class of persons, many of whom, to say the least, are worthy of all praise. Thanking you for sending me the MS., and trusting your work is progressing,

"1 am, dear Madam,
"Yours faithfully,
"MATTHEW ORIEL."

Miss Carteret read it sadly, Dick sitting as still as a mouse—which was extremely unusual. Then she read it over again with a heightened colour, and looked a little puzzled.

"I—I don't quite understand," she faltered. "Of course, it's nice to be told you have some talent - that is very kind of the Dean—but he's so very, very orthodox, and you know those verses are about an unbeliever's shallow reasoning. Does he think it wrong to show the folly as well as the wickedness of that sort of thing? Does the Dean really think infidels 'worthy of all praise?'"

Her lips were parted in dismay, her cheek faintly flushed. Dick sat staring palely before him. Then suddenly, with an air of desperation, he turned round.

"Aunt Dora," he said, solemnly, "I may as well tell you first as last. It's my fault. I made a little mistake."

He took the returned MS. which had accompanied the note, smoothed it out, placed it on her knee, and gazed at the ceiling.

Miss Medora's eyes fell on the title. She gave a shriek—she who never was known to shriek.

"You - you wicked boy!" she gasped.

"You've sent the Dean the Mother-in-Law'!"

She was really out of temper for a second; then the absurdity of the thing—the grave criticism by the grave clerical dignitary of that piece of nonsense from a grave woman like herself; the difficulties his politeness had experienced in saying what it was needful he should say, were too much for her sense of humour.—She sank back in her chair and laughed till she could laugh no more.

The moment of horror passed; Dick went down on his knees, and tendered most abject apologies.

"Let me write," he said, "at once, and confess my own idiocy, and say how horrified you are, and send him the 'Meadow in the Spring."

Miss Medora pointed out to him, with relapses into ladylike giggling, his own culpable carelessness. She dictated a note to the Dean, explaining that her amanuensis she did not mention Dick's name—had made a mistake. She entered anxiously into the circumstances ander which the fatal "Mother-in-Law" had been composed; she enclosed, though with much diminished hope, the other verses. But

whether the Dean did not fully accept the explanation, or whether his ideas of her had received a shock from which he could not recover, certain it is that they met with no success. They came back with the sad simplicity of a printed refusal from the magazine of which the Dean's son-in-law was the editor.

"I think," said Miss Medora, "he might have written one line. It's so dreadful he should think — " And even Dick's new love affair did not comfort her.

One day, however, that young gentleman came bursting in, waving something aloft.

"Hurroo!" he shouted. "Long live Miss Medora Carteret, the Poetess Laureate," and he placed in her hand, even as he had placed the "Mother-in-Law," a card just arrived, bearing the magic words:—

"DEAR MADAM,—I gladly accept your capital sketch of ——

"Yours faithfully,
"Editor, B.L.U."

"Bright Literature Union!" he shouted.
"O whisper it low, and speak it with awe,'
it's the Dean's own Society!"

LOVE IS FOR EVER.

OVE is for ever—think no more
You give and take your heart at will:
Tis mine—or was not mine before;
You never loved—or love me still!

You seem to hate—appeared to love.

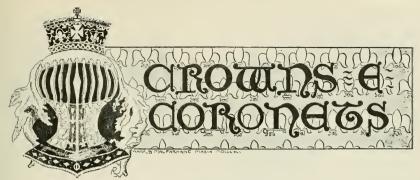
But one was false; choose which you will.

You hate? Your love a lie has proved!

You loved? Why then you love me still!

Then say no more your love is dead;
Nor death, nor hell, true love can kill.
Were it a dream, it might have fled,
But love, you loved, and love me still!

E. E. BRADFORD.



By MARY HOWARTH.

TATHEN upon Thursday, the 28th of June, 1838, our beloved Sovereign lady Queen Victoria proceeded to Westminster Abbey, there to be crowned in solemn state, she did but participate in a ceremony which, in different forms, but with the same object, had been in practice as long as queens and kings have existed. Upon her head, as upon those of the monarchs of biblical times, the oil of anointment was poured; into her hands, as in the chivalrous, medieval days, the golden spurs of knighthood were placed; her fragile, girlish fingers grasped the sword of State, and upon her glossy brown hair, the sign and seal of her high office, the golden crown of majesty was placed. Thus, with prayers that had been said over every English monarch crowned in the Abbey from the time of Ethelred, at any rate, the little maiden, scarcely more than a child, was made ruler of a great nation.

The pattern of Queen Victoria's crown is familiar to us from its counterfeit presentments upon the coins of the realm. Just in the same way, and from old pictures, seals, and sculptured effigies, we are able to discover the shapes of those worn by our monarchs throughout history. As for the crowns of other nations, we have drawings of them which have been handed down from generation to generation. The crown of the Pharaohs is perhaps the oldest known in this form. Those of ancient Persia are recorded by the sculptures found at Persepolis; the coins of the Greeks displayed theirs, the vases of the Etruscans theirs, and to paintings, seals, and effigies we have only to go, to discover what the Franks, Merovingians, and

Anglo-Saxons considered to be the style of crown most suitable as the outward expression of kingship and monarchy.

Though a good-sized volume might be filled with a history of the crowns and coronations of English rulers only, it is possible to set down much that is interesting concerning them in merely a limited space.

Thus it is pleasant to know that Harold is supposed to have been the first king crowned in Westminster Abbey. His immediate predecessor, Edward the Confessor, was crowned in Winchester, and other kings before at St. Paul's, in London, and at Kingston-upon-Thames. It is interesting also to learn that Alfred, to his other picturesque distinctions, adds that of being the first king of England to wear a crown, Alfred's crown is described as of "goulde wyerworke, sett with slighte stones and two little bells." It is said to have been valued at £243 10s., but all we know now of it is from old records, for it and other crowns once kept in Westminster Abbey, were, by order of a certain Parliament, "totallie broken and defaced" That Parliament was one of the Commonwealth. which also broke up the crown used at Harold's coronation. Another, a woman's crown, of the same period, which had been believed to be "massy gould," upon "triall" was found to be of silver gilt enriched with "garnetts, foule pearles, saphires, and some odd stones." This aping of a wealth that was not has its counterpart in the action of Queen Caroline, the wife of George II .. who, to add to the splendour of the pageant of her husband's coronation, and because she

CROWN OF HENRY 1.

possessed herself only one pearl necklace, borrowed jewels for the occasion for her own adornment from all the ladies she knew, and even went the length of hiring diamonds.

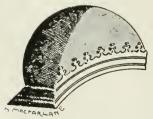


HAROLD'S CROWN.

In shape the crowns of our monarchs have differed greatly. Those of the Anglo-Saxon period were plain, evolutions of the simple fillet or string

of gems, worn as a sign of royalty before the crown became general. Egbert, Ethelwulf, and Canute have come down to posterity in the helmet-crown, which was, as its name indicates, more strictly a helmet than a fillet, in that the centre was covered in instead of left open. From the very first the pattern chosen for the points seems to have been the trefoil. But there were diversities in these as well as in the shapes: Harold's square crown, a curiously uncomfortable-looking erection, was surmounted

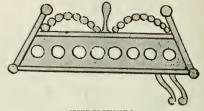
by a scroll instead of battlements. A change was worked upon this pattern when Norman William came to the throne, and more elaboration



CROWN OF EDWARD III.

ensued, both his crown and that of William Rufus displaying the pendants at the back occasionally added to the regal head-dress, and, in appearance, most unsuitable to metal-work. These, and the

very odd ear-pieces of Henry I., may have had



CROWN OF WILLIAM I.

some part to play in the fixture of the crown upon the head. If so, they must have been most uncomfortable.

Of the crowns of the Plantaganet kings there is ample testimony in their effigies. A few of our early kings elected to be buried in France. Henry II., to whom the banks of the river Loire were an earthly Paradise, was entombed in the Abbey of Fontevraud, with his Queen, Eleanor of Guienne. "On the morrow," says Matthew Paris, describing the ceremony, "when he should be carried to be buried, he was arrayed in the regal vestments, having a golden crown

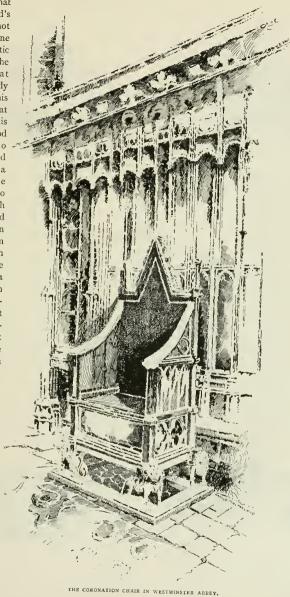
on his head, and gloves on his hands, boots wrought with gold on the feet, and spurs; a great ring on the finger, and a sceptre in the hand, and girt with a sword; he lay with his face uncovered." His crown was somewhat



(From effigy in Westminster Abbey.)

substantial and plain, with oval and star-shaped bosses alternately disposed upon a slightly indented band of gold; much less elaborate and shapely than that of Richard the Lion-hearted, the trefoils of whose crown were richly ornamented with the honeysuckle device so much liked and

employed at that time. Richard's remains did not all repose in one place. Romantic to the end, he elected that though his body should lie at his father's feet at Fontevraud, his brains and blood should go to Poictiers. and his heart, "as a remem brance d'amour." to Rouen, Both at Fonteyraud and at Rouen effigies of him were erected, on each of which he is shown with a pointed crown of much ornamentation. It should be noticed again that his hands were encased in gloves richly jewelled on the back; a sign of royalty not to be mistaken. He was a monarch keenly alive to the glories of splendid circumstance. Of the crown carried before him at his coronation we read that it was so closely set with jewels and so massy with gold, that two Earls had to



support it when it was placed upon his head in the process of the ceremonial.

King John owned many crowns, but so unfortunate was he that when his son Henry III. came to be made king in Gloucester Cathedral, there was no crown available for the occasion, and a simple fillet had to occupy its place. The ancient crown of England was in London at the time, where Louis the Dauphin was practically in possession. Another, perhaps the crown of German manufacture, splendid in design and execution, of which much has been written, was lost in the Wash during the disastrous crossing of that sea by John and hisfollowers shortly before John's death. The crown afterwards worn by Henry III., as illustrated in his effigy in Westminster Abbey.

and shown upon page 626, is a perfect example not in our power to speculate. Its present distinctof the fleur-de-lys design.



CROWN OF HENRY IV.



(Made for the Field of the Cloth of Gold.)

The crown of Edward I., to be seen upon tion is, of course, incontestable.

the Great Seal of that monarch in the British Museum, is very noteworthy, inasmuch as to its wearer England is indebted for the Coronation Chair. in which her monarchs have sat at the service of their consecration ever since. The stone, brought from Scone in Scotland, had been used before as the Coronation Chair of the Scottish kings. Legendary history identifies it with that upon which Jacob laid his head when he saw the heavenly ladder. It was said to have been taken from Egypt into Spain in or about the time of

Moses, from Spain to have been borne to Ireland,



CROWN OF HENRY VII.

The effigies of Henry IV., and of his wife, Joan of Navarre, in the chapel of St. Thomas à Becket, in Canterbury Cathedral, afford proof to this day of the splendour and beauty of the royal costume of the first king of the house of Lancaster. A most exquisite crown, full of delicately conceived and cunningly wrought design-the strawberry leaf mingled with the fleur-de-lys of France-appropriately completed attire in every way gorgeous to behold. Henry V. broke up one crown called "the Harry" to give as pledges.

Descriptions such as "a great fleur-de-lys garnished with one great balays (a pink ruby), and one other



(From stone corving.)

and from Ireland to Scotland. What may have been the true story of its long by-gone past it is



(From a Newark shilling.)

balays, one ruby, three great sapphires and two great pearls," sound most elaborate and splendid.

All the pinnacles of this crown seem to have been used in a like manner. Henry is said also to have pawned the lower half of the crown, in which were fifty-six balays, forty sapphires, eight diamonds, and seven great pearls, valued at £800 sterling of the money of that period. It was no uncommon resort in times of stress to pledge the royal state jewels. Henry III. pledged three crowns in Paris to enable him to carry on his contentious war with the Barons; but all were redeemed and brought again to England later.

With the crown of Henry VI. a new pattern was introduced. This was the dome or arch, surmounted in most instances by the cross raised upon a ball, which added an ecclesiastical air to the former effect of regality. It is repeated in the crown worn by Henry VII., which is a very fair specimen of the design of that period, and is, furthermore, interesting, inasmuch as it displays upon its band the royal motto, "Dieu et mon droit." The drawing of this crown is a copy of the one in King's College, Cambridge. The effigy of the monarch in Westminster Abbey had a head of silver, which, in Henry VIII.'s reign, was stolen and never recovered.

An illustration has been made of the crown worn by Henry VIII. at the pageant of the Field of the Cloth of Gold. It shows a gracefully shaped erection, repeating the old favourite fleur-de-lys pattern and the surmounting cross, and is now to be seen upon the Great Seal preserved in the Guildhall Library. That of Edward VI., also illustrated, is taken from a stone carving above the entrancegates of beautiful Penshurst, in Kent. Its original was found in an old iron chest in 1649. It is described as enriched with one fair diamond, valued at £200; thirteen other diamonds, ten rubies, one emerald, one sapphire, valued at £80; and seventy pearls. Its weight was two pounds and one ounce.

The first coronation of a queen in Westminster Abbey, was that of Matilda, who was, as an old chronicler expresses it, "hallowed to cwene" in May, 1068. Archbishop Aldred, who had crowned William the Conqueror, performed the same office for Queen Matilda, under circumstances less exciting than those that had attended her husband's ceremonial. For at that service, in response, as they imagined, to an outcry against the king, which they heard inside the Abbey, the soldiers outside immediately set fire to all the houses they could

reach in the near vicinity of the place, with the result that William, Archbishop Aldred, and the monks, were left alone in the Cathedral, William, trembling with apprehension, so 'tis said, at the strange occurrence. The outcry, it may be mentioned, was one that only would have alarmed men ignorant of English etiquette, for it was that of the "recognition," the eager, loyal response of the spectators to the inquiry put to them whether they would accept the king as their monarch, "Recognition" is a very ancient item of the service of coronation, and used to follow the oath of the king to serve his people well. At the last few coronations it has almost been dispensed with, but historians narrate that the shouts of the Westminster scholars from their own seats in the Abbey testified. on each occasion, amid the general silence, to the conservatism with which customs are maintained. in Oueen Elizabeth's ancient foundation.

Queens Mary and Elizabeth had so many crowns of state, that no two pictures show them wearing the same. One that belonged to Mary, illustrated in a rare French print, is portrayed as a light and elegant erection suitable for a woman's wear.

Of the crowns of the Stuart and Hanoverian dynasty there is less to be said, seeing that with them we arrive at times when it is more easy to discover a proper knowledge of their shapes and workmanship. But an article concerning such a subject would be incomplete were mention to be withheld of the break-up and sale of the regalia in 1640 by the Commonwealth. Therein were destroyed many magnificent crowns, the loss of which, even as specimens only of the goldsmith's work of centuries, we cannot but deplore. Among those that went thus were the crowns of James I. and Charles I. The one belonging to Charles, probably an antique crown, contained a picture of the Virgin Mary in one of the fleur-de-lys. It was valued at £1,023, and was thus described:-

					f.
Eight & twenty diamon	ids, at	£6 €	ach		. 108
Sapphires & rubies					. 380
Two emeralds .					
Two hundred & third	ty-two	o pear	ls, a	t 158	
each					
One & twenty rubies					. 16
Seven pounds & seven ounces of gold, valued					
at £40 per pound, w	rith si	x oun	ces a	bate	
for stones					. 280
				,	(1,023



PRINCE'S CORONET.





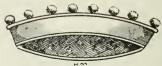
EARL'S CORONET,





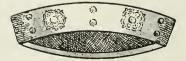






MARQUESS' CORONET.





BARON'S CHAPLET.

The illustration which is here given is copied from a Newark shilling, stamped 1646, probably cast at the time of the siege.

Art suffered a relapse under the dynasty that succeeded. There was less worth and beauty in the heavy ungainly signs of kingly office worn by the Georges than there had been in those of the Tudors. Nevertheless to the beauty of the crowns of our beloved Queen we have ample testimony to offer. They are elegant and becoming; two characteristics of crowns not very often combined.

From crowns to coronets is an easy transition. Precisely for the same reason that crowns became worn, namely, as an outward sign of rank, those of aristocratic personages were adopted. They were used first in the form of a wreath or garland or chaplet; light and graceful fillets that were really becoming to men whose hair was allowed to grow long. Later, they became heavy and ponderous, but never so ugly and pretentious in appearance as at the end of the seventeenth century, when the cap of crimson velvet, with its gold knot and tassel and the bordering of ermine, was added to the jewelled gold of the original coronet.

Three very interesting and excellent examples of early coronets are shown on the preceding page. One illustrates the decorative and elegant coronet worn by the Black Prince, who usually chose for the design of his fillet the golden rose of England, ornamented with pearls. Another displays the coronet of Beatrice Countess of Arundel, copied from her effigy in Arundel Church, in which the chaplet is seen to be worn over the huge horned head-dress of Henry V.'s reign. The third is the tilting helm of Richard, Earl of Arundel, in 1346, in which, as will be noticed, the coronet is surmounted by the Earl's crest.

It has been conjectured that to the heralds incorporated by Richard III. is due the credit of having decided what should be the distinguishing marks of noblemen, shown by their coronets. From that date the differences that separate each one from the others have been identical. Then, as now, a duke's coronet was a circle of gold richly chased, with eight strawberry leaves upon its upper edge. Four strawberry leaves, alternating with four pearls or balls of silver upon short points, is the pattern of the coronet of a marquess. An earl's has eight strawberry leaves, with as many pearls or balls raised above the leaves on high points or pinnacles.

To the indulgence of James I. is due the right of a viscount to wear a coronet, and to that of Charles II. a baron's privilege. A viscount's coronet is a circlet of gold surmounted by twelve pearls or silver balls, closely set on the upper edge. That of a baron has six large pearls or balls on its upper edge. Barons were wont to wear the chaplet only, before they received permission to assume the coronet. A sketch showing the chaplet will be found on the preceding page.

The Restoration, as of course was only natural, was the signal for every kind of revival of the state and majesty of kingship. Charles II. it was who improved upon the coronet worn by the Princes of Wales by adding an arch to its simple rim. He also issued a warrant assigning to the princes and princesses of the royal house the coronets borne by them to this day. His pleasure it was to accord, as well, to the peers of Scotland and Ireland the right to assume the same coronets as those worn by aristocrats of their rank in England.

Modern taste is excluding the cap and ermine of the coronet, and using its original form only. This is one case out of many in which it is well to acknowledge that from the simpler and more classic perceptions of our forefathers we had sadly retrograded. Happily a rapid return is being made to the forms of ancient days, when the art of the goldsmith was in its zenith, and men worked less for piece, and more for time. We are alive to the fact that a great show is not to be appreciated so much as true and solid worth—in crowns and coronets as well as in other things.

A FALLACY OF OUR TIME.

By R. H. MURRAY.



AS there no prescience in the statute that made the safety of Rome dependent on the perpetuation of the vestal fires? There was at least the recognition of a principle whose

significance was strikingly attested by the subsequent history of the empire. So long as the flame of Vesta, the goddess of the hearth, burned brightly; so long as the home-life of the nation remained pure and strong, so long was the national life vigorous and progressive. From such homes as those of Virginius and the Gracchi there emanated a lustre whose brilliance invested Rome with a dignity and grandeur surpassing the martial renown achieved by her dauntless legions. But when increasing prosperity had brought in its train the luxury and extravagance which sapped its strength as no invading forces could ever have done, breeding artificial tastes and habits that could not fail to lead to dissipation: when public life began to supersede home life, and the nation, giving itself over to pleasure-seeking, had become simply a congeries of conflicting factions, each struggling for the supremacy, instead of an aggregate of simply reared families with that interest in the nation. which is the only true source of patriotism-a pure and happy home—then began that national decline traced for us by the pens of historians who saw only too clearly the cause of it all, though powerless to avert the catastrophe already looming on the horizon of the empire. In different ways they strove to awaken their fellow-countrymen to a sense of their danger: Horace by his mocking banter, Juvenal and Persius by their scathing satires, Martial by his stinging epigrams, and later, Tacitus and Suetonius by their lurid pictures of social depravity. But in vain: more effectually than that inundation of the Tiber years before, had the inrushing flood of luxury and vice extinguished the fire on Vesta's altar, and with it the glory of Rome.

In the appalling disclosures given by Tacitus of

the corruption of domestic life we have the key to the more conspicuous enormities that have made his pages little else than a record of crime. On his dark canvas there are side-lights that suggest infinitely more than they reveal. And as if, to his far-seeing vision, the downfall of his nation were already consummated, and he had even then discovered in those hardy northern tribes which had more than once put the Roman eagles to flight, the instrument of that downfall, the astute historian endeavours to arrest the mad infatuation of his countrymen by turning their attention to those German warriors who had already defied the Mistress of the World. With a minuteness all too emphatic to have been accidental, he holds up for their consideration his graphic and trenchant description of that severely simple and pure home-life which had supplied the sinews of war of the German armies. By those sharp, incisive contrasts that defy expression in any other language he points his moral, urging upon his fellow-citizens a return to the wholesome simplicity of life from which had sprung Rome's greatness; but he warned in vain: the resistless tide flowed on, and those who were guiding the ship of state refused to believe that it was bearing them swiftly to the rapids until the thunder of the enguling vortex awoke them to a knowledge of their doom. When the northern hordes swept down upon the Eternal City, they found its people, from the highest to the lowest, so emasculated by luxury and vice, that resistance to the barbarian invaders was scarcely attempted, and they fell before them an easy prey. For long years home-life, the cradle of patriotism, had ceased to exist, and thus every healthful impulse that can purify society was withdrawn, and the current of individual life, diverted from its proper channel, rushed confusedly into the turbulent sea of public affairs, each tributary augmenting the general impurity.

The nation is but the sum of the families composing it; therefore, if family life is weakened or destroyed, the nation suffers accordingly; and the policy that would seek to promote public good by

the sacrifice of home-life is suicidal. This was the mistake made by the Greek and Roman legislators. and its disastrous results might have taught succeeding governments the lesson, that only as the links are severally strong, can the chain itself be relied upon to resist the strain of national exigencies. And yet of what use is history if it does not teach us by its records to avoid a repetition of errors which have once proved fatal? Are there no such fallacies reappearing in our day as those against which the wise men of Greece and Rome warned their countrymen? To any observer of the signs of the times it must be apparent that we are threatened with the same calamity that destroyed those powerful nations. The fires of the hearth are in danger of extinction. Public life, in this nineteenth century, is rapidly superseding home-life. There are many indeed, nowadays, in the higher walks of life especially, to whom the word home is a meaningless sound. From infancy they have been confided to the care of hired servants, and transferred as soon as possible to the charge of schoolmasters, who are supposed to be much better able to discharge the duties and undertake the responsibilities which their parents have deliberately shirked from one pretext or another. At some fashionable boarding-school they remain, with occasional visits to home, until of an age to choose a calling for themselves. If, for a few years thereafter, they reside with father or mother, it is the club or the particular haunt of the set with which they have associated themselves that now claims their presence, not the home-circle. Indeed, there probably is no such thing, for if the father or mother be what we express by "society people." home is merely a convenient hotel, into which each comes merely to eat and sleep. Both parents and children have given themselves up to the so-called claims of society, and have therefore neither time nor inclination for the cultivation of those relationships which constitute family life.

Or, supposing the heads of a household are not devotees of society, but merely given up to the claims of this "cause" or the next, to the neglect of duties lying nearer hand, the result is the same; the home, having lost its central point of attraction, ceases to be home, and its other members, feeling no attachment to it, occupy themselves with any pursuit that seems to offer scope for their unemployed energies. Hence the dissatisfaction with

domestic duties which has recently found expression in the New Woman movement. Home has lost its attractions: the sentiment that inspired such lyrics as "Home, Sweet Home," or "The Auld Hoose," no longer finds response in the hearts of our club-frequenting sons and our "emancipated" daughters. The fires on the hearth may languish or die out; what matters it when no one any longer cares for their warmth and brightness? It is to the great arena of public life that all must flock. On that arena each is prepared to contest for fancied "rights"; and the old spectacle reappears of Amazon warfare, the women determined to dispute possession of the field with the men. Well. the race is generally to the swift, and the battle to the strong, and it requires little foresight to decide how this contest will result: but the present aspect of affairs signally proves that the threatened destruction, in our time, of domestic life is producing the same effects as in the days of Rome's decline. Severed from the home, with all its hallowing influences, and thrown promiscuously together in the great struggle for conflicting "rights" and interests, men and women become harder and more selfish: nor can even the accomplishment of their aims compensate for the loss of that sentiment which, next to religion, is the most powerful for good on earth-the love of home, the source of all true patriotism.

Carlyle notes, as one of the most prominent indications of the decline of France previous to the great Revolution, the rapid growth of clubsalways the outcome of the loosening of domestic ties; and by the application of the same test we may be pardoned for auguring ill of our own age; for whatever may be said to the contrary, it is a self-evident fact that home no longer occupies its former place in the nation, and that its influence in moulding the character of the young has been largely superseded by other agencies which, whatever their advantages, are incapable of supplying those incentives to purity and goodness that emanate from the parent's heart, and, next to religion itself, are the most powerful for good over the life of any man or woman.

On every hand we see the same fatal tendency at work. In the country, where there are fewest rival attractions to allure from its shelter, and where its traditional glory still lingers, home is nevertheless fast losing its hold; and the quiet cottage with

its setting of wooded hill, winding stream, and free expanse of undulating fields, is being forsaken for the exciting tumult of the crowded city with its artificial pursuits and pleasures that so soon eclipse all simple, natural tastes.

If we go deeper, we shall find the explanation of this fatal tendency in the decline of religion. It is no less true in the case of the individual than of the nation that righteousness alone exalteth; yea, a true seer was he who, after portraying an exquisite picture of homely piety, traced his country's grandeur to "scenes like these." And if we, through neglect, allow the kindred flames of piety and home-love to die out, let us be assured that the fate of our national greatness is sealed; our glory is already on the wane.

MRS. BATHSUA MAKIN AND THE EDUCATION OF GENTLEWOMEN.

By Prof. Foster Watson.

RS. BATHSUA MAKIN was the teacher appointed for the Princess Elizabeth, the second daughter of Charles I. It is probable she entered on her work in 1641, when the Princess would be six years old. From 1642 onwards the little Elizabeth had to live in separation from her mother and father, who were hurrying about the country in all the uncertainty of Civil War. The child was a great lover of books, and it is said that before she was eight years old she read and wrote French, Italian, Latin, Greek and Hebrew. In 1650 she died. Everything points to the fact that Mrs. Makin was an admirable tutoress.

After the Princess's death, it is said that Mrs. Makin taught school at Putney. In 1673 it is certain she had a school at Tottenham High Cross. In that year she issued her "Essay to Revive the Ancient Education of Gentlewomen." In this essay Mrs. Makin suggests a scheme for a liberal education, which, with certain alterations, is very much the curriculum which obtains in high schools to-day. She is, it is true, over-sanguine as to the possibilities which good teaching may bring, but it is surprising, on the whole, how much she has in common with the best of education to-day.

Her essay is written to the public to induce them to promote what we call the Higher Education of Women. If in our generation the vis inertiæ of public thought on the subject was found to require so great an effort to move, it will readily be imagined that in the listless, careless days of Charles II. it was an enterprising undertaking to attempt to stir up an interest on the subject.

What, then, were the arguments Mrs. Makin used?

In the first place, she shows that women in former ages have been educated in "Arts and Sciences." She gives a lengthy list, in which she includes the Princess Elizabeth. With a sense of humour, Mrs. Makin acknowledges that it is objected against women, as a reproach, that they have "too much tongue," but she rejoins that "it's no crime they have many tongues. If it be, many men would be glad to be guilty of that fault." It may then be objected "against poor women: they may learn tongues [languages] and speak freely, being naturally disposed to be talkative; but as for any solid judgment or depth of reason, it is seldom found in their giddy crowns," She proceeds to show that women have been good logicians, divines and poets. Having enumerated a goodly list, Mrs. Makin points a conclusion:

"It is usual for men to pride and boast themselves in the wisdom, valour, and riches of their ancestors; what wise men their forefathers have been, what great things they have done, and what large possessions they have had, when they themselves are degenerated and become ignorant, cowardly, beggarly, debauched sots. I hope women will make another use of what I have said; instead of claiming honour from what women have formerly been, they will labour to imitate them in learning those arts their sex hath invented,* in studying those tongues they have understood, and in practising those virtues shadowed under their shapes; the knowledge of arts and tongues, the exercise of virtue and piety, will certainly (let men say what they will) make them honourable."

Having paved the way by proving from past experience that women can become successful scholars, Mrs. Makin's argument now appears to assume the form that women ought to be educated up to their ability. She makes a very moderate claim. "I do not mean," she says, "that it is necessary to the esse, to the subsistence, or to the salvation of women, to be thus educated. Those that are mean [poor] in the world, have not an opportunity for this education. Those that are of low parts, though they have opportunity, cannot reach Ex quovis ligno non fit Minerva. My meaning is, persons that God hath blessed with the things of this world, that have competent natural parts, ought to be educated in knowledge. That is, it is much better they should spend the time of their youth to be competently instructed in those things usually taught to gentlewomen at schools, and the overplus of their time to be spent in gaining arts and tongues and useful knowledge, rather than to trifle away so many precious minutes, merely to polish their hands and feet, to curl their locks, to dress and trim their bodies, and in the meantime to neglect their souls, and not at all, or very little, to endeavour to know God, Jesus Christ, themselves, and the things of nature, arts and tongues, subservient to these."

In the elaboration of this position, Mrs Makin drives home her points with much vigour. Here are several of her sentences: "Merely to teach gentlewomen to frisk and dance, to paint their faces, to curl their hair, to put on a whisk, to wear gay clothes, is not truly to adorn, but to adulterate their bodies.

"Had God intended women only as a finer sort of cattle, he would not have made them reasonable.

"Doubtless, if that generation of sots (who deny more polite learning to women) would speak out, they would tell you, If women should be permitted arts, they would be wiser than themselves (a thing not to be endured); then they would never be such tame fools and very slaves as now they make them; therefore, it is a wicked, mischievous thing to revive the ancient custom of educating them.

"More particularly, persons of higher quality for want of this education have nothing to employ themselves in, but are forced to cards, dice, plays, and frothy romances, merely to drive away the time."

There is a sort of savage common-sense in the expression of her opinions, far removed from the laboured elegance which one might expect from the "polite learning" which she advocates so ably. Perhaps the most remarkable characteristic of her essay is the abstention from overstatement. She does not make absurd claims. She has "not the intention to equal women to men, much less to make them superior. They are the weaker sex, yet capable of impressions of past things, something like to the best of men."

Mrs. Makin has now offered proofs of her contentions: (1) that women can learn; (2) that when they have "opportunities" and "parts" they ought to receive the higher education of "polite learning." She has still to meet "objections" which can be urged.

I.—Yes, women should be educated, but the use of the Needle and Housewifery are quite enough.

Answer: "I know not what may be meant, but I see what is generally done. In most schools for educating this sex, little more is proposed by the undertakers, or expected by the parents. As far as I can observe, the less anything of solidity is taught, the more such places are frequented. I do acknowledge, in the state of the question, that women should be accom-

[•] Mrs. Makin asks, "Why are the virtues, the disciplines, the Nine Muses, the Three Graces, etc., etc., represented as being of the female sex? Why should the seven Liberal Arts be expressed in women's shapes? Doubtless, this is one reason: Women were the inventors of many of these arts, and the promoters of them, and since have studied them, and attained to an excellency in them."

plished in those things that concern them as women. My meaning is, *The overplus time*, etc. etc."

11.—If women are learned, no men "will adventure to marry them."

Answer: Some men will not, for fear they be overtopped in wisdom. But others will; some because they are conscious of their own want, and some because, being learned themselves, such wives would be suitable. Should this way of educating gentlewomen be set on foot, it will take time before so great a number be had as to be beyond the number of learned men desirous of such wives.

III.—It is against custom to so educate gentlewomen. "Bad customs ought to be broken."

IV. Solomon's good housewife is commended for certain qualities. No mention is made of arts or tongues. "I do not intend to hinder good housewifery, neither have I called any from their necessary labour to their book. My design is upon such persons whose wisdom is a burden."

V. Women will be proud, and not obey their husbands. They will boast. Wit will develop ill-nature.

Answer: What is the effect of learning on men?

VI.—The object of men's education is public business. Women have none.

Answer: Queens on thrones. "Lay this aside; there are other ends of learning besides pleading in the Hall and appearing in the pulpit. Private persons may many ways please themselves, and benefit others. This objection, also, will turn the point upon all men that are in a private capacity.

VII.—They will not "mind their household affairs."

Answer: Do not men attend to their country business as well if they have had a liberal education? "You may as well say a gentleman that hath country affairs to manage ought not to be a scholar, because he will be poring upon his book, when he should be looking after his ploughmen."

VIII.-Women do not desire learning.

Answer: "Neither do many boys (as schools are now ordered), yet I suppose you do not

intend to lay fallow all children that will not bring forth fruit of themselves; to forbear to instruct those which at present do not thank you for it." But all this objection points to is— Reform the schools.

IX.—Women are of "low parts."

The writer pleads only for those who have competent parts.

X.—Women are of softer natures, more delicate and tender constitutions, not so fixed and solid as men.

Answer: If soft, the more impressionable; if weak, the more shame to leave unstrengthened their weakness.

XI.—What need women learn tongues? There are books enow in English.

Answer: "Was all learning in English, as it is now in French, I think those dead languages would be of little use, only in reference to the Scriptures."

But we want a knowledge of *things*—and a knowledge of languages helps this, while it is subservient to it. Mrs. Makin is here under the direct influence of the educationist, Comenius.

Once more Solomon's virtuous woman is instanced. She is commended for good house-wifery, to be reverenced of her servants, blessed of her children, and praised of her husband. And now, Mrs. Makin carries war into the enemy's camp.

She grants, as she has done all along, the desirability, the necessity of housewifely qualities. But she now protests that for these it is necessary to have knowledge in the Arts and Sciences, which can hardly be got without a knowledge of languages.

"To buy wool and flax, to dye scarlet and purple, requires skill in Natural Philosophy. To consider a field, the quantity and quality, requires knowledge in Geometry. To plant a vineyard, requires understanding in Husbandry. She could not merchandise without Arithmetic. She could not govern so great a family well without knowledge in Politics and Economics. She could not look well to the ways of her household except she understood Physic and Chirurgery. She could not open her mouth with wisdom, and have in her tongue the law of kindness, unless she understood Grammar,

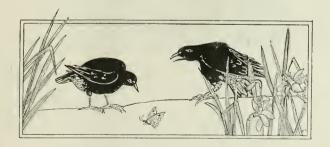
Rhetoric, and Logic. This seems to be the description of an honest, well-bred, ingenious, industrious Dutch-woman. I desire our women (whose condition calls them to business) should have no other breeding but what will enable them to do those things performed by this woman."

This most trenchant argument Mrs. Makin reserved for a late part of her essay. She had shown that women can learn—that they ought to learn; she completes the argument by showing that education will enable them to do well what they will have to do somehow.

It may be noticed that Mrs. Makin thinks very highly of the Dutch ladies; in fact, Mr. Pleydell himself, in "Guy Mannering," in speaking of them to Miss Bertram, hardly said more than does she. In connection with this, it is desirable to mention that Mrs. Makin includes in her list of women who have been good linguists the name of Anna Maria Schurmann, of Utrecht. She includes the same name in her list of those who have understood logic. Again, the same lady figures as a philosopher, and finally, as a divine. Over and above the esteem which such classification denotes, Mrs. Schurmann is described in terms translated from "Spanhemius," as "Nature's masterpiece amongst women."

In 1659 a logical dissertation of Mrs. Schur-

mann's was translated into English by C. B., under the title, "The Learned Maid, or whether a Maid may be a Scholar." This is a curious work, supporting the position that women should be educated in the highest knowledge of the age. On reading this little book, it is perfectly clear that Mrs. Makin has borrowed from this clever Dutch lady. The maid who is to engage in study is to be one who has leisure; the subjects of study are very much the same; the maid in both writers is said to have a natural desire of Arts and Sciences; in both she is represented as requiring occupation to exercise her mind. With both, learning is a "hedge against heresies." The objections, too, which are urged are couched in similar terms. For instance: Women seldom or never are preferred to Public Offices, and as these are the occupations for which men go through a liberal education, it is unnecessary for women. The treatise of Mrs. Schurmann, however, is thrown into a series of logical syllogisms, with minor and major premises and conclusions. Mrs. Makin's treatise is much more comprehensive, has the addition of copious examples, into which Mrs. Schurmann does not enter, and has that enthusiastic vigour of expression to which I have referred, and which gives an individuality to its authoress.





TERUSALEM FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

UNDERGROUND JERUSALEM.

By Charles Harris, M.A., F.R.G.S.

I T is nearly a quarter of a century since the city of Jerusalem was regarded with anything approaching to the interest which attaches to it at the present time. The excavations now being made by the Palestine Exploration Fund, and resumed after so long an interval, promise to reveal much valuable information, and Dr. Bliss's reports, sent at intervals from the seat of operations, are always awaited with eager expectancy. Some introduction, however, will be necessary, before proceeding to give an account of the work of the exploring party.

It may be news to many of our readers to learn that Jerusalem is a buried city. Its appearance to-day gives the traveller a very incomplete and incorrect idea of the Jerusalem described and alluded to in the pages of the Bible: for nearly the whole of this, strange as it may seem, is now underground. Yet this burying process is only what is going on everywhere. As houses are pulled down and new ones built, rubbish accumulates, and the level of the ground gradually rises, and we need go no farther afield than our own metropolis for an excellent example of this. The London of the Roman legions lies buried at a depth of from ten to thirty feet below the City streets; and a part of the Roman wall of fifteen hundred years ago, preserved by order of the

Government, appears in the basement on the north side of the new post-office in St. Martin's-le-Grand, while many other portions of it are known to exist at various places in the City at the same low level.

But Jerusalem lies buried far deeper than Roman London; and this is not merely owing to the more perishable nature of the common class of Eastern houses, as in the case of Tel-el-Hesy, or Lachish, where the ruins of eight well-marked cities, one over another, were unearthed by Dr. Bliss in 1893, but mainly to the terrible devastation through which, in strange and solemn irony, the city whose name signifies "Habitation of Peace" has been, more than any other, subjected to the horrors of war. And here let us briefly glance at the natural position and history of Jerusalem; for this is necessary in order that we may understand how it has become buried to such a depth, and how the work of the explorer has been carried on.

It must always have been a fortress of great natural strength, built as it was amid the mountains of Judea, only accessible by means of long, wild, hilly roads, and at a height of 2,600 feet above the sea. On three sides—on all except the north—deep ravines divided it from the hills which rose all round:—On the west and south the valley of Hinnom (A); on the east the

Valley of Jehoshaphat (K); and the Kedron (L). Of the two hills—cleft by the Tyropæan valley (F)—on which the city was built, Mount Zion (C) lay on the west, and Mount Moriah (H) on the east. It was on Mount Zion that David built his palace; for more than a thousand years it was the dwelling-place of his successors, whether Jewish or foreign; and the fortress of Zion was the last

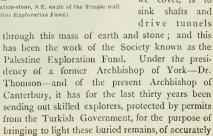
spot which held out against Titus and the Roman legions in the terrible siege of A.D. 70; while on Mount Moriah Solomon reared that mighty temple which was the wonder of the age. Destroyed in part by Nebu chadnezzar, the city and Temple were rebuilt at the restoration, only to be captured later on by the rulers of Egypt, Syria, and Rome The Temple built by Herod the Great, as a passport to favour with Iews, fell the before the army of Titus, and when the city, under the Roman name of Elia Capitolina, was rebuilt by the Emperor Had-

rian, a temple to Jupiter was erected in the place of that which had been so long dedicated to the service of God. With the spread of Christianity came a change, and churches began to rise in the Holy City; but the seventh century brought with it the invasions of the Persians and the Moslems; the efforts of the Crusaders, three centuries later, lasted for less than a hundred years, and a Mohammedan Mosque, the Kubbet-

es-Sakhra, or Dome of the Rock (G), miscalled the Mosque of Omar, still stands on the summit of Mount Moriah.

Now we begin to see where the Jerusalem of the Bible is. No less than *eleven* sieges, with their deeds of violence and destruction, have left scarcely a trace of it above ground, except the Temple platform (J) and its wall. The city of

so many sacred memories lies buried - all the southern portion of it - beneath tons upon tons of rubbish, at a depth, in many cases, of more than 100 feet. The higher parts of the slopes descending from the walls, as shown in the illustration, are composed mainly of loose débris-fragments of stone of all shapes and sizes-thrown down during successive periods of devastation: and more than half of the Temple wall is thus concealed from view. It is evident that the only way to obtain the information we covet, is to sink shafts and

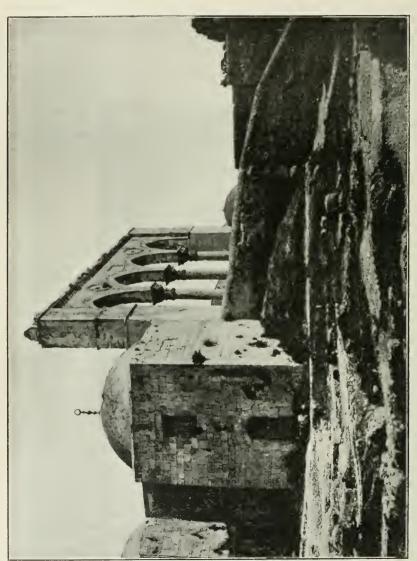




VASE.

Found by Capt. Warren at the corner foundation-stone, S.E. angle of the Temple wall

(By permission of the Palestine Exploration Fund.)



NORTH-WEST CORNER OF THE TEMPLE PLATFORM, JERUSALEM. (By permission of the Palestine Exploration Fund.)

surveying the country, and of identifying and locating places in various parts of Palestine which are mentioned in Bible history.

The fact that modern Jerusalem stands on many feet of rubbish was demonstrated in 1866 by Captain Wilson-now Major-General Sir Charles W. Wilson; and the work of exploration was commenced in 1868 by Major-General Sir Charles Warren-then holding the rank of Lieutenant-and an efficient staff of non-commissioned officers of the Royal Engineers. In November of that year, a shaft was sunk near the south-east angle of the Temple area (H), and tunnels driven in the direction of the wall. Great personal danger was incurred, for the loose shingle ran like water when disturbed, and stout wooden frames had to be provided to line the shafts and tunnels. Characters in red paint were found on the lower stones of the wall-some of which were of immense size-and these marks were shown to have been made by the Phænician masons employed by Solomon, before the stones were set in their places, probably as they were finished at the quarry. The solid rock was struck at the depth of no less than 70 feet 3 inches below the present surface level, and the great corner foundation stone, 3 feet 8 inches high and 14 feet long, was seen and examined; while in a recess cut in the rock was found a small jar or vase, probably used for holding the oil employed in the ceremony of laying the stone, for we know that the Jews bestowed great care on the corner stones of their buildings, and the dedication of Solomon's Temple was celebrated by a festival of especial grandeur. There can be little doubt that the Temple, like the Tabernacle and all its furniture, would be consecrated by being anointed with the holy oil, and just as in our own day it is the custom to deposit relics of the period in or near a foundation stone, so this antique jar of pottery, similarly deposited in its own little niche of one foot in depth, nearly three thousand years ago, has rested unharmed through all these centuries, to give to us, in our search for truth, its silent yet eloquent testimony.

The immense artificial platform (J) on which Solomon's temple and its successors were built, is an irregular oblong, about 1,600 feet long, and 1,000 feet wide, with an area of 35 acres. Its western wall in ancient times abutted on the slope of the Tyropean valley separating the two hills, an indication of which

may be seen in the illustration, outside the wall; but within the city it has been filled up almost entirely with débris. On the other side of the valley rose the slope of Zion, surmounted by the palaces of the kings of Judah, and in later times by the palace of Herod; and the hills were connected by bridges, one being known as the Zion Bridge, forming a communication between the Temple precincts and the Palace Hill. This we learn from the writings of the Jewish historian, Josephus.

Many years before any excavations were made, Dr. Robinson, the eminent American traveller, had noticed, near the south-west angle of the Temple platform (F), certain projecting stones in the wall, which had unmistakably the appearance of the spring of an arch. It was reserved for Sir Charles Warren, not only to prove the truth of this surmise, but to discover the original level of the valley spanned by the bridge in the time of the Saviour, and the pavement along which He and His disciples must often have passed. The Royal Engineers, under Warren's direction, made a careful survey of the projecting blocks, which extend along the wall for 50 feet, and the span of the arch having been calculated from the curve of the stones. a shaft was sunk about 40 feet from the wall. After digging to a considerable depth they came upon the remains of the actual pier which supported the arch, 12 feet thick and 50 feet long. On a level with the base of the pier was the stone pavement of the ancient street leading along the Tyropæan valley, and lying on this pavement, between the pier and the wall, were the fallen stones or voussoirs of the arch. However, the explorers did not stop here. They broke through this pavement, and digging still deeper, a canal or aqueduct was found, together with arch stones belonging to an arch older than the first. Several lamps, weights, and jars were also brought to light, and this at a depth of 45 feet below the present surface.

With this brief sketch of the early explorations we must be content: to enumerate all Sir Charles Warren's discoveries would be beyond the scope of this article; but it is only right that we should remember, to quote the words of Sir Walter Besant, the Honorary Secretary to the Fund, that "it was Warren who restored the ancient city to the world; he it was who stripped the rubbish from the rocks, and showed the glorious Temple standing within its walls, 1,000 feet long and 200 feet high, of mighty

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masonry; he it was who laid open the valleys, now covered up and hidden; he who opened the secret passages, the ancient aqueducts, the bridge connecting Temple and town. Whatever else may be done in the future, his name will always be associated with the Holy City which he first recovered."

The future has passed into the present. What

has been done at Terusalem since Warren's time? Practically nothing, if we except such limited work as could be carried on within English territory, as, for example, the tracing of the rockscarp of Zion in the property of the English school and cemetery by Mr. Maudslay; or the interesting items of news furnished from time to time by Herr Schick, the lerusalem architect. For various reasons, exploration in or around the city was impossible, though in other parts of Palestine the Fund has been able to carry on valuable work with excellent results.

But in April, 1894, a firman, available for two years, was granted to the Fund by the Turkish Government, authorising excavations to be resumed; and the able services of Dr. Bliss, the Society's explorer, who had just completed his remarkable exhumation of the successive layers

of buried Amorite cities at the mound called *Tel-el-Hesy*, were at once in requisition. The problem to be solved is the course of the south wall of the ancient city, and the starting-point is the rock-scarp of Zion near the English cemetery (B) working eastward. When we know exactly what the southern limits of the city were—and this can only be ascertained, as before, by sinking shafts and tunnelling

through the superincumbent débris—we shall be in a position to understand many difficult or obscure portions of Bible history in which reference is made to the topography of Jerusalem. In addition to this there is always the possibility in explorations of this kind, of suddenly coming across some quite unexpected and startling discovery.

> On the north of the city, where the ground is more nearly level, and the approach, therefore, easier, it was found necessary to build at various times, strong and massive walls to resist the attack of the enemy: but the rocky slopes of Zion on the south were so steep by nature, that they formed no slight protection in themselves against assault; and to render this practically impossible, it was the custom to "scarp" the rock, or cut down the face of it perpendicularly, so as to afford no foothold whatever for the assailant. A very slight wall on the summit of this scarp, and a little behind the edge, would be all-sufficient; and we can easily understand the force of the taunting implication of the Jebusites, that the blind and the lame were quite competent to hold their citadel against the forces of King David.





THE MOABITE STONE.

now hidden by the accumulation of centuries—that Dr. Bliss has undertaken to trace; and since May 14th, 1894, he has been actively engaged in the work.

One of the most interesting discoveries was that of a tower built upon a rock-platform, within the outer scarp. A good photograph was taken of this; the wall of the English cemetery is shown adjoining, and Dr. Bliss standing half-way down. This will be a lasting memorial of the work, as the proprietors, it is stated, intend to leave the place open, so that the tower, scarp, and ditch, may always be seen. The scarp itself has been traced for a considerable distance; but Dr. Bliss has also discovered a genuine wall, which has been followed for over 1,000 feet up to the date of recent despatches.

Besides this, a gateway in the wall was found, and by that curious instinct which is born of experience and aptitude in exploring, he was able to hit upon the ancient street leading to it, the pavement showing evident marks of having been worn by feet. Pottery, lamps, vases, and some very fine

city:—" The site of the Holy Sepulchre, the direction of the second wall, the date of this and that bit of masonry; these, rather than society gossip, form the subjects of chit-chat at afternoon teas and picnics." It is, indeed, encouraging to compare the favourable auspices under which the work is carried on, with those under which Sir Charles Warren laboured with so much tact and skill. Then the governor and leading inhabitant took but very slight interest in it; but now his Excellency Ibrahim Pasha, the *Mutaserrif*, affords it his full countenance and protection.

Dr. Bliss's account of his life at the explorations is full of interest:—" Our workmen at present," he



TABLET FROM HEROD'S TEMPLE.

mosaics have also been brought to light; and many objects of this kind from the various expeditions, together with photographs and plans of the explorations, are to be seen at the offices of the Fund at 24, Hanover Square; but the present researches are as yet far from completion, and it is impossible to say what new treasures future work may reveal. As Dr. Bliss remarked, writing from his camp on June 6th, 1894:—"The excavations should set at rest a few, at least, of the controverted points of Jerusalem topography; and who knows but that we may make some unexpected discovery?" He also speaks of the great interest in the matter shown by the inhabitants of the

writes, "number only fifteen [this was in June, the number has since been increased], but they are most competent and energetic. Two of them worked with Sir Charles Warren as boys. Our carpenter, who makes the mining frames, also worked for him. The ever faithful Jusif presides over the labourers with his usual efficiency. Our tents are pitched within a few yards of the work. This certainly has its advantages, but it is like living in one's office—one never gets away from the work. As a rule I am here the whole of the day. Ibrahim Effendi's tents are on the terrace below. The position is a glorious one, with the ground sloping down steeply to the Valley of Hinnom. I can look out from my

tent and see the Mount of Olives, and the everchanging mountains of Moab. The weather is very changeable. We have had in the fortnight quiet days of burning heat, boisterous days of fierce winds, days of simply charming weather, and one day of real cold. The nights are always delightful, except when the winds pull the tents about. My duties are varied, including laying out and constantly superintending the work, writing my reports, attending to our simple commissariat with the daily accounts, and keeping things generally smooth, which is a strain on one's patience and diplomacy. The work attracts numerous visitors. We were honoured the first Saturday by a visit from three Consuls, the English, Russian, and Austrian. The work begins soon after five, and ends at half-past six; the eight-hours movement has not yet been inaugurated at Jerusalem."

Early in this year letters were received both from Dr. Bliss and Herr von Schick, reporting the discovery of a Latin inscription at the Coenaculum, near the Zion Gate. The stone inscribed is built into the wall, and is a votive tablet to Jupiter on behalf of the welfare and greatness of the Emperor Trajan and the Roman people, erected by the Third Legion, which takes us back to the interval between the destruction by Titus and the founding of Œlia Capitolina. Roman inscriptions in Jerusalem are very rare,

and this discovery is, therefore, of exceptional interest

It is with a feeling of deep satisfaction that one notes the increasing interest taken in work of this kind, by individuals of all ranks and classes, and one may almost say, of all nationalities, His Royal Highness the Duke of York, speaking last year at Westminster Town Hall, on the occasion of a lecture given by Major Conder, referred in eloquent terms to the fruitful labours of the Fund, and added, "The work that lies before us in the immediate future, as you will hear directly, is nothing less than the systematic excavation, so far as may be possible of the chief historic sites of Syria. What has been done, and is still being done, in Chaldaa, in Egypt, in Greece, and in classic Rome, yet awaits doing in Palestine. An important beginning has been made, and we must actively and strenuously go on with it."

And this interest once aroused, can only deepen. The facts brought to light by the archæologist are ever increasing our knowledge, aiding our comprehension, and adding new and fuller meaning to those associations which to the hearts of millions of human beings have made Palestine the Holy Land, Jerusalem the Holy City, and have shed an atmosphere of reverence around each hallowed spot, which neither the rush of the invader, nor the lapse of time, has dispersed or swept away.





By Mrs. PARR.

CHAPTER IV.

ORD DOWNHAM took care to close the curtains of the sedan into which he put his daughter. "Confusion seize it!" he said to himself, "but I believe she's short of her wits. What else could make her weep and bewail at finding herself a Countess? Or, stay, maybe the joy is too much for the poor wretch. Lord, what a plague women are! As Solomon hath it, 'born to give trouble as the sparks fly upwards.' Well, well! We'll try what chance a turn at some finery will have towards drying her tears; I've known Honeyman and Mortley succeed where Sloane and Radcliffe have failed. Turn down St. Martin's Lane, sirrahs," he called to his chairmen, "and stop at the 'Two Gold Canisters' on the pavement."

The men did as they were commanded; the chair behind followed their example, and in a short space of time Sarah was bidden to step out; doing so she found herself not before her father's house, but in front of a shop, its goods set out in tempting array behind a glass sash window. But there was barely time to glance at the outside, before she was within and being led upstairs to a room where sat a comely dame surrounded by brocades, lutestrings, cambrics, fine embroideries, interspersed with Indian furs, Chinese fans, and little lacquered cabinets.

"Mistress Mortley, I have brought my daughter to thee," said Lord Downham. "She cuts but a sorry figure in this homely attire, but as I have, by the parson's aid, just turned her into a Countess, I trust thee to make her appearance befitting to her present state."

"A Countess!" exclaimed Mrs. Mortley. "Good faith, then, my lord, I wish the young lady joy; and, though I say it, that would have no need to, if any leader of the ton were present, she's in luck this day; first, for the securing of so fine a marriage, which, seeing she's her father's daughter, is no better than she deserves; and second, for her being abrought to me, for I'll wager none in town understands the fashion better than I do myself. Leave her to me, my lord, leave her to me; and 'fore I let her go I vow that she shan't know herself for the same lady you have brought here."

"As there may be those who have a curiosity to see their new relation you will use all expedition," said Lord Downham. "Her Grace of Torbolton hath not yet set eyes on her son's choice, nor do I wish her to until you have had the shaping of the bride," and he nodded towards Sarah, adding "you see we trust our secrets to your safe keeping, Mistress Mortley."

"Indeed, my lord, you do me honour, and to show myself not unworthy, for neither am I, of the trust given to me, I'll take the young lady's measure, and 'gin you'll leave her here an hour or more, I'll fashion her a cambric robe such as will give her a fitting appearance in case she be visited as you say."

Lord Downham readily assented to Sarah remaining; and leaving the chair in which she had come to convey her home again, he took his departure, impressing upon Mrs. Mortley that she was to supply all his daughter's immediate wants, and provide for her future ones, by helping her to select the various articles which would be now necessary for her toilette.

Having curtised his lordship out, Mrs. Mortley returned to poor Sarah, who stood just where her father had left her, trembling like a frightened bird.

"Nay, Madam," answered the girl, replying to some question as to the fashion of the dress to be altered to her size, "do with it and me as best pleases you, for I carry too heavy a heart to care what pattern falls to my share"; and the tears which, during Lord Downham's presence, she had with difficulty repressed, began to flow afresh.

Now, notwithstanding Mistress Mortley's good opinion of herself, she had a kindly heart and a ready sympathy, therefore, after eyeing Lady Sarah for a few seconds, she said, gently:

"I fear thy hand and thy liking did not go together, my poor lady. Is not this marriage one of thy choosing?"

"Indeed, no. I had no choice, neither was word of it spoken to me till I reached yonder church."

"And your lord?"

"I never saw him till then, and 'fore heaven, rather than take again the looks he cast upon me, I pray that we may never meet more."

"Poor child!" murmured Mrs. Mortley, finding in Sarah's queer figure much excuse for the bridegroom's incivility. "I have no cause to be beholden to her Grace of Torbolton, by reason that she gives her favours to Mistress Hackitt at the sign of the 'Peach-tree in Blossom,' but all the town speaks of her as a noble-hearted lady, and that her son's greatest sin is being too tightly held by his mother's leading strings."

Sarah sighed. "What will she think of me?" she said, dolefully, "forced upon them as I see I am."

"Well, well, dear lady," replied Mrs. Mortley, "all marriages arn't made in heaven, that's

plain to see; but wherever they're made, we poor women have to make the best o' what's sent to us, or else it's a sorry life we lead; and one of a wife's first duties is to set herself off to the best advantage, and there is no better way of doing that than by coming to Martha Mortley, and so your ladyship will say ere I have done with you."

Sarah tried to smile her gratitude, for it was evident that Mrs. Mortley was spending much thought and trouble on her task. She put a stitch here, and a gather and plait there, until the gown seemed really to belong to the figure she was forming it to. One of the assistants was set to shorten a Marseilles quilted petticoat, another to look out a suitable stomacher. The services of a neighbouring friscur were called into requisition, a pair of scarlet-heeled shoes procured, so that after two hours of judicious painstaking Mrs. Mortley was rewarded by seeing the favourable change her clever fingers and ready skill had effected.

"There," she said, leading Sarah to the glass which stood opposite the window, "does your lady-ship know yourself?" and the startled cry and quick blushes of the girl told that the metamorphosis was complete.

"1—I don't think it can be me," Sarah exclaimed, as between laughing and crying she stood and gazed at herself. Her face looked none the worse for being flushed and excited, and her dark hair drawn high up, with its bunch of cherry rumple knots, showed her small features to advantage, and combined with the high heels of her shoes to make her look ever so much taller. Then the cherry petticoat and coquettishly-arranged cambric gown, with its open front and embroidered stomacher, reflected such a pretty-looking little figure, that Sarah, who had yet to learn the breeding which conceals natural impulse, threw her arms round Mistress Mortley's neck and fell to sobbing, so that the good woman, greatly touched, said softly:

"Nay then, dear lady, but 'twill be hard if thou grow not so fair as thon art innocent. Rest content that had thy lord but known the sweet cunning of thy ways, he'd ne'er have thrown a scornful glance in thy direction." Then she bustled off to get from her store a sip of cordial, which, when Sarah had taken it, seemed to revive her, so that after a while she began to feel more calm; and seeing this, Mrs. Mortley put her into the sedan, telling her to expect an early visit from her on the morrow,

when she would bring patterns of brocades, Italian lutestrings, and other rich conceits which the Earl-her father-had ordered should be provided for her wear. In saying good-bye, Sarah felt she was parting with a friend, for the shrewd remarks and kindly advice given by worldly-wise Mrs. Mortley had come as a word in season to the poor girl, calming her excitement, stirring her pride, and giving her resolution to try and make the best of herself and her situation. Therefore, when the chair stopped at Downham House, though feeling fit to sink before the group of servants assembled to have a gaze at the new-made bride, she exerted herself to walk past them, with head erect and eyes straight before her, until she reached the apartment where she found Dame Margery in a fever of halfsatisfied curiosity and excitement, occasioned by Merton having ran in to tell her the news just communicated to him by my lord himself.

"Lord, lord, child! what have they done to thee?" exclaimed the old woman, as, her first burst of wonderment over, she held Sarah out at arm's length to look at her. "Why, thou'rt fashioned out of all knowledge. A Countess! a Duchess! Ay, then, that I should ha' been spared to see the day. I'm fit to cut capers like any Joan witch for very joy o' heart;" and she fell to laughing till the tears ran down her face; but poor Sarah could not keep her company.

"I would sooner have been condemned to do service as a kitchen-wench," she said, "than have had this indignity thrust upon me. Oh, nurse, couldst thou but have seen the look of withering scorn he turned as he asked, with a shudder, 'Would they marry him to that dowdy?'"

"Dowdy, indeed! A plague on his ill-breeding and scurvy manners, an' 'twere well gin all husbands got such a wife. Tut, tut, child, pay you no heed to aught but that you are a real live Countess, able to toss your head high above your fine sisters, who thought themselves bravely mated when one got Sir Andrew Chard, and the other my Lord of Rushbrook's son; and as for old Madam, why, mark me, if she's not ready to lie down and let you walk upon her. Oh! nobody'll hear of anything now but my grand-daughter the Countess and our future Duchess. Lord, lord, I hope I'll keep my wits through it all. Merton's all but as mad as me now, and will be the worse o' the two 'fore the day's out, I warrant ye, for

my lord's doin' the matter handsome, and we're to have a chine o' beef and a venison pasty downstairs—and a capon lined with sausage-meat for my lady, with dishes of tarts and cheesecakes, and ale and punch without stint above and below. The bells o' Nanton Church's to be set aringing, and a bonfire made on the green. Come, Cosset, cast aside thy glum looks, say to thyself all this is for me, and sure but that'll cheer thy heart."

But Sarah was not to be comforted. She sat, half-stunned by the unexpected turn her life had taken, planning, resolving, wondering, until she determined to understand from her father how her position had come about, and under what circumstances this marriage had been concluded. Learning that Lord Downham was within doors, she sent a message, asking an interview, which demand, though rather unwilling to be put to fresh trouble, his lordship assented to. On Sarah making her appearance, he was pleased to compliment her on the improvement in her person.

"Tis a pity thy bridegroom was so pressed for time," he said, with a sneering laugh. "Did he see thee now he would scarce know thee for the dowdy he dubbed thee."

Sarah's heart quickened its beating, but she made no answer, fearing lest she should be led away from the questions she was bent upon asking.

"I have but little time to spare," said her father, "so what is thy request or thy errand?"

"I have come to ask you, my lord"—and the girl's white face and quivering lips told the effort she was making to speak calmly—"the reason of this marriage. What made Lord Rosemont marry me?"

"Thy father's ready wit, girl; so lay it to heart, and if ever need comes, remember 'tis to me alone that thou owest thy title and thy husband. For thy good I have forfeited a rounder sum than it would enter thy mind to count upon. 'Stead of the money I had won at fair play, and which I stood sorely in need of, I made the exchange of my daughter for his Grace of Torbolton's son. To be plain, I gave up the money on a promise that my Lord Rosemont was to marry thee."

"And Lord Rosemont gave his consent?"

"Had he held back, his father's honour was gone, and the name of Torbolton tarnished. Faith, I think he saved both at a cheap rate. 'Tis I who have cause to draw a long face when I thrust my hands into empty pockets"—and, suiting the action to words, he spread out the embroidered flaps, and then rose to show that he desired an end to be put to the conference. "Now you know the whole circumstance," he continued, with a nod of dismissal, "and with that knowledge I need hardly say that, though I ask no gratitude now, if ever I should stand in any need of assistance, remember that one good turn deserves another."

Seeing the visible agitation his words produced, he turned his back, under pretence of looking for his cane, hoping his daughter might thus more easily recover her self-possession; but, overpowered by indignation and the utter hopelessness of making her father feel her humiliation, Sarah, to save herself from utterly breaking down, took the opportunity of rushing from the room; and when Lord Downham, at the sound of the shutting door, looked round, he found that his daughter was gone.

Shall we follow her into that upper chamber, little better furnished than a garret would be now, where she divested herself of the new finery, because in it she could not take her grief with comfort, and it was sorrow that she was bent upon hugging to her heart? The girl's sensitive nature had had a blow it could not at once recover. Living among her world of created romances, she had received from them no greater injury than an overstrained notion of sacrifice and devotedness. Had she read such a story as the one she was now called upon to bear part in, her admiration for the bridegroom would have known no bounds. Imagination would have supplied all deficiencies; and though the author gave never a hint, she would have felt that, while absent, the hero must, all too late, meet her whom 'twould be then his sad fate to love. How duty would tear these two hearts asunder, and how gloriously miserable for ever after they must be 'twas an easy task to conjecture. But the poor wretch who acted as bride? Who would care to know her fate? Let her be happy or not, good or bad, who minded? The only thing left for her would be to die; and, laying her troubled head upon the little spindle-legged table. with its tiny glass swung high above it, our poor Sarah sat bemoaning her sad fate until, worn out by excitement, fatigue, and want of rest, she forgot her sorrows by falling fast asleep.

CHAPTER V.

During the fortnight which elapsed between Lady Sarah's marriage and her return to Nanton, her whole existence seemed entirely changed. She lived in a perfect whirl of excitement and novelty. Every hour some new sensation seemed to awaken in her, or some fresh sense to be unfolded. The great event of this never-to-be-forgotten time was the day on which she was presented to the Duchess-a day on which the poor child all but died from exaggerated fears and nervous fancies. Her grace desired that her daughter-in-law would pay her first visit unattended and alone, so, with no one but Margery, Sarah set off for the stately old mansion in Bloomsbury, where the Duchess, with sickening anxiety, sat waiting her advent. Surrounded by everything that taste could desire and wealth procure, Lady Torbolton had never known real happiness. She was a woman of high principle, keen intellect, and with power to feel to the full the humiliation of being united to a man who, professing neither of these qualities himself, lacked the ability of appreciating them in others. His wife and his son both bored the Duke with their learning, and irritated him by their goodness.

Knowing how much he was hiding, and never certain what knowledge of his secrets they possessed, he had ceased to feel at ease in their presence, and often, to rid himself of this galling fret, he sought distraction amid company that he felt degraded to be one of. With all the misery of this union before her son's eyes, the Duchess had never ceased to impress upon him the necessity of seeking a wife whose character and disposition should accord, in some measure, with his own.

"Save yourself, mother, such a woman is not to be found," Lord Rosemont would answer. "Should I now give you free leave to choose for me—among those we know—is there one such as you have been describing?" And the Duchess was fain to remain silent while her son told her that 'twas her kindred mind and sympathetic love had spoiled him for all others. That he must measure them by the standard she had set before him, and if it was not his good fortune to meet her he sought, then he cared not though 'twere writ upon his tomb that he died the last of his name—"An honourable name, mother?"

"Yes, my son, and for that we have much cause to rejoice."

For the honour of this name, and to keep it still untarnished, Lord Rosemont had made his great sacrifice, at least, so he said, in a letter written after he had parted with the Duchess, who, at the time of parting, was aware of nothing more than that, in company of his old friend and tutor, her son contemplated making a Continental tour of more than ordinary length. But now, beyond this consideration, the mother saw a nobler motive. that in the promises exacted from the Duke, in his honest contrition, in his resolves for the future. Lord Rosemont anticipated a new era, when, fresh love and confidence springing up between the husband and wife, the sunset of his mother's life should flood out the shadows which had fallen from the clouds of early years.

"It is for me that he has done this; for my poor sake he hath destroyed himself. Oh, my son! my son!" she cried, "rather I had died for thee. With me the turmoil of life has lost its fierceness; but thine is all to come. This roisterer's daughter, what can she be but like the others of her family?"

Cruel memory presented before her the bold ogling charms of Sarah's reckless, handsome sisters. She pictured them as she had last seen them at a masque at Marlborough House, scantily draped as Juno and Diana. Oh! if Rosemont's wife was to be one of a crew like these, what would become of her? She saw the swagger this woman would enter with-the insolent air of triumph she would shield her false position under-and almost in the midst of these sorry reflections there appeared at the threshold a poor little face, overspread with terror, and before the door had well shut, or the Duchess recovered enough to say a word, her hand was seized, and a passion of tears rained on it by the forlorn-looking figure, which had fallen at her feet, sobbing aloud:

"Pardon, Madam; your pardon for me."

The Duchess always declared that in the surprise of that moment her heart had opened, and before it had time to close again, Sarah had flown in, and taken entire possession. By gentle degrees Lady Torbolton learnt from the girl the whole of her sad story, and, in telling it, she innocently betrayed her sweet simplicity, and laid bare her sensitive, loving nature. The Duchess saw how,

from her earliest days, the child had thirsted for love, which no one had given to her. How deeply each arrow aimed at her unfortunate appearance had sunk, until the one barbed with the exclamation which Lord Rosemont had uttered, pierced her with a wound under which all hope had sickened and died. Looking at her as she now was, the Duchess cried fie upon her son for his ungallant speech, caused, she felt sure, by his sore heart and chafed temper. She tried to make excuses for him, but Sarah evidently did not consider that he stood in need of them.

"Indeed, Madam," she said, "he spoke but sober truth. Good Mistress Mortley, at the 'Two Gold Canisters,' expended all her skill and her good nature to turn me into what you see me; but your son's eyes fell upon me before then, and never until I saw the good service fine apparel could render me, did I realise how contemptible my appearance must have seemed."

The Duchess smiled.

"Take good heart, Sarah," she said. "If Mistress Mortley could effect such wonders in a day, what may not a year do; if thou will lend all thy aid to it, we will yet turn thy husband into a lover."

Sarah clasped her hands in ecstasy.

"Oh, Madam!" she cried, "you are but too good to me. I live but to do your pleasure."

"Nay, dear child, not for my pleasure, but for his dear sake whose love I would fain transfer to you. Oh, Sarah," she added, after a pause, "strive to win my boy, he is worthy to have the first and the fullest love of thy pure maiden heart."

Thus the day was spent, and at its close it was decided that the next morning her grace would have an interview with Lord Downham, when, as she was alone (the Duke having repaired to his Scotch estates for a few weeks), she would demand that she should have, for a time, the society of her new daughter. To this request Lord Downham gladly assented. He was at heart only too pleased that his daughter should be well received, and the circumstances of the marriage (not at present to be formally announced) kept, in a measure, secret. Fortunately, the society of London was at that moment too much engrossed with politics and kings and queens to have much curiosity to spare about the affairs of private individuals: stormy discussions, violent speeches, teeming with pointed and personal allusions, were hurrying Queen Anne

to her grave; and though, to the general public, her robust figure and ruddy face gave no warning of danger, the attendants who surrounded her felt convinced that her end was drawing near. The most strenuous exertions were being made by the partisans of the house of Stuart to substantiate the claims of that ill-fated family. Never had success seemed so certain to them as now. Her Majesty was surrounded by Jacobite ladies; she openly showed her dislike to the Elector George; and was in constant dread that either he or his son would appear at her Court and assert their position as heirs to her crown. By the Jacobites in Scotland the news of the queen's favourable feelings towards her brother was enthusiastically received.

A rumour was spread, and very generally believed, that Charles Edward was in the neighbourhood of Stirling; and it was known that several lords well affected towards him had betaken themselves to their Scotch residences. Her Grace of Torbolton was not free from party feeling, and she confided to Sarah that there seemed every likelihood of an event coming to pass which might necessitate Lord Rosemont's immediate return. But these anticipations were doomed to a speedy disappointment, and in their midst the Sunday dawned which was to see George of Hanover a king. Lord Downham was the first to carry the news to his old patron, the Duke of Marlborough, and was most conspicuous among those who formed the train at the exiled Duke's triumphant return.

Engrossed with the Marlboroughs and their plans, he could find no time to bestow upon his daughter, and Sarah was then left to the undisputed charge of her new relation. To the Duchess's great regret, she found herself obliged to join her lord in Scotland, and, much as she wished to have Sarah with her, she knew a sojourn there would be sadly against the girl's future; therefore, denying herself this happiness, she exerted all her energies to find some one to supply her place, and thought herself in no little luck when chance threw in her way Mrs. Harcourt, a lady as much beloved for the amiable qualities of her heart as valued for her good sense and varied accomplishments. Here was a companion under whose guidance Sarah would doubtless ripen into that model of perfection which the fond mother deemed necessary to mate with her son. Sarah and Mrs. Harcourt seemed mutually drawn towards each other. Lord Downham was agreeable to the arrangement, and before another week was over the thing was finally settled and the day fixed on which the little party, with the addition of Mrs. Harcourt, was to return to Nanton, their departure hastened by Lady Torbolton's anxiety to escape from the contending tumult of emotion which was then swaying all London.

Accounts had already been received of the arrival of secretary Craggs at Herenhausen; of the cool reception given to Lord Clarendon, thereby discovering the King's hitherto hidden bias towards the Whig party. Still, no certain time had been fixed for the new monarch's departure from his beloved Electorate, which he clung to with a pertinacity not strange to a man of his character. It was plain to all who knew him that George of Hanover had no ambition. He would have been well contented to remain master in his own little Court, surrounded by favourites more heavy and dull than himself. He shrank from becoming the ruler of a people whose manners and customs were strange to him, and of whose very language he was ignorant. Finally, his beloved Madame Platen refused to enter a country where the people were so barbarous that they would most likely chop off his head in a fortnight. Never was a newly-made monarch in a greater dilemma; and though letters and messengers were constantly arriving to tell him of the enthusiasm manifested in his cause, he could not overcome the idea that he was usurping a throne to which others had better right than himself.

To salve these twittings of conscience, he sent word that the dead Queen's body should receive all the honour, and be finally buried with all the pomp consistent with her exalted rank. The ceremony was, therefore, fixed for the 24th August; but few were much interested in the event—how should they be, when so much self-interest was at stake, when each one had a scheme to hide, a place to secure, a great man to toady.

Sickened by all this ingratitude, baseness, and deceit, Lady Torbolton longed to escape from London and seek refuge in the quiet of their Scotch home, supported by a hope that when she and the Duke should be thrown entirely upon each other's society, when clubs and gaming-houses were no longer near to entice him, he might gradually be brought to see a charm in home life and domestic

love to which for many years he had been apparently blind. In no way would her son be so repaid as by feeling assured that confidence was again restored between his father and herself. These happy anticipations filled her mind as she sat waiting for the parting visit which was to take place that day between Sarah and herself.

"I am resolved," she said half aloud, "to leave untried no means by which this happy result may be brought about: and if only Sarah keep her resolve, my boy will never have cause to sorrow for following the dictates of his noble nature. Enter," she called out, as a tapping at the inner door announced some visitor certain of admittance, and, as she expected, Lady Sarah made her appearance, hesitating for a moment after her entrance, as if a little shy of the display her figure made in the new-fashioned scarlet riding-coat which Mrs. Mortley had made her don for the Duchess's inspection. "Stand at ease," cried out the Duchess, playfully shouldering her fan, and laughing at Sarah's embarrassment. "Nay, child, but the thing's a mighty pretty fashion for one of thy age, and the hat and feather become thee to a marvel." Then, drawing her down beside her, she gave a sigh, saying: "It saddens me to think our parting hour has come; and only the certainty that my blossom will grow all the more sweet sustains me. 'Twill be a task to hold to my resolution of never naming thee in praise to my boy, still I mean to stand by it."

Rising, she opened the drawer of a little writing-table, took out a case which contained the last portrait of Lord Rosemont-one he had given to his mother as a parting gift-and her determination to transfer it to Sarah showed how completely the young girl had gained possession of her heart. Putting it into Sarah's hands, she said, "Promise me, Sarah, never to part for an instant from this sweet image; gaze upon it, speak to it, and caress it until each feature has grown familiar to thee. Say to it, in the midst of thy studies, 'These are done for thy sake.' And when the task is completed, tell it, "Tis for thee I triumph.' So, child, wilt thou become identified with him of whose life thou art to be the sweetness."

Poor little Sarah! her heart was too full for words, and it was not until the portrait—set as a locket—had been fastened round her neck that she

subdued her fast-flowing tears sufficiently to speak; and even then her assurances were interrupted by frequent sobs, so touched was her soft young heart by the constant proofs of affection the good Duchess displayed towards her.

"Ah, Madam," she sighed, "how can I, except by following out your wishes, repay your generosity? My nature would be vile indeed did it not strive its utmost to deserve your love, and if by so doing it should ever be my happy fortune to win a small measure of esteem from him whom it hath been my unlucky lot to cross, my gratitude will be as boundless as is your goodness."

"I see no reason why you should not win my boy," said the Duchess, attentively surveying the earnest face before her; "thy looks are very fairly favoured, Sarah."

Sarah's face crimsoned with joy. "Nay, Madam, 'tis your love, not your eyes, which view my poor perfections."

"Not so, child, I tell thee but the honest truth; and this I say with no fear of filling thee with vain conceit, but rather that thou may take heart by the knowledge, and lend thyself to increase to the full the good gifts which nature hath bestowed upon thee."

Sarah's eyes beamed with pleasure. With a glad little laugh she said, archly, "Rest content on one point, dear Madam—whatever thrust my lord has cause to level at me, that I am a dowdy will not be his again in truth to say."

"Now, fie on him for such a slander, and doubly fie on thee to bear him malice for what before thou made some excuse for."

"And justly so, sweet Madam, and you may give it credit by this fact that the small presence I now possess is so strange to me, that often when I stand up to my mirror I ask the reflection I see there, if it is me—if I am Sarah Downham?"

"And," laughed the Duchess, "the reflection says, 'No, I am Sarah, Countess of Rosemont.' Ah, my child," she added, as the chiming of the hour told her the time had come when they must say adieu, "'tis so hard to bid thee farewell, that I hasten my departure lest after all my courage fail, and I entreat thee not to leave me."

Opening her arms she clasped Sarah to her heart, whispered a few more loving encouragements in her ear, and then gently led her through the anteroom to the door, where a servant stood ready to

conduct her to the chair which was in waiting below. As long as the house remained in sight Sarah strained her head to take a last look at it. The corner turned, and it was hidden from her view, then, closing the curtain of the sedan, she took out her locket and sat gazing at the face it contained until she reached Downham House, of which place she took leave the next morning. By eight o'clock they had started, and a very silent party they seemed.

Recent events had caused Mrs. Harcourt to leave London with a heart sorely saddened and disappointed; and something in her face awed old Margery from giving vent to the joy she felt would fill her, when she found herself safe and sound back at Nanton, the centre of a gaping crowd of thirsty news-seekers. As for Sarah, she could do nothing but sit recalling the events which had so suddenly changed the current of her life. She felt older by many years than when, some weeks before, she looked out, with wondering eyes, at the scenes they were now passing. The altered manner her father showed towards her, the changed bearing of the servants and persons with whom she came in contact, all had its effect in impressing upon her the vast stride she had made in stepping from plain little Sarah Downham to be the Countess of Rosemont, the future Duchess of Torbolton, Yes, fate had ordained that, in all probability, the title so nobly borne by her whose goodness had given new life to Sarah's poor crushed heart, should descend upon Sarah herself. "And I will try to grow worthy of it," cried the girl to herself, as with closed eyes she leaned back, shading her face from view under her mode hood. "I hardly dare hope 'twill ever be given to me to win my lord's love. but this I know, that dowdy though he dubbed her. he shall never have cause to say that Sarah Downham disgraced his mother's noble name,"

CHAPTER VI.

LITTLE did our travellers dream what bustle and excitement the prospect of their arrival was causing in Nanton, where for weeks past the village had been kept alive by reports of the changes taking place at the Priors. A whole suite of rooms was being put in order for the reception of the new Countess and the lady who was to bear her com-

pany. Workpeople from Regis had been called in to repair and polish up the furniture, and never within the memory of the oldest inhabitant had such a scouring of walls and floors taken place. Fortunately for all engaged, old Madam was laid up by a sudden attack of illness, so that, instead of raging and storming at all those she came within sight and hearing of, she was obliged to keep her bed, shaking with fear lest her waiting-maid should now repay the flouts and taunts she was at other times forced to silently endure and put up with. Although Madam had been reasonably elated at her granddaughter's match, her joy was somewhat embittered by the sudden ignoring of her opinion and authority in all that her son wrote concerning Sarah's future movements, which, save by the presence of Mistress Harcourt, her governess, were to be free and unfettered.

"Governess, forsooth!" stormed the old woman. "What need is there for her governess now; though the girl had not wit to spell her title, 'tis hers all the same. Send with her one used to wait upon women of quality, a pert hussy who'll put her up to Court ways, and teach her to ogle and smirk and tongue scandal and gossip with the best of 'em. I'll write and tell Downham my mind; he's acting a fool's part in being party to such a scheme." But before this resolve could be put into practice, the timely malady had gripped the old worldling, and, engrossed about herself and her symptoms, she little heeded who came to or who stayed at Nanton.

Mrs. Harcourt was fully established and at home before even Sarah was permitted an interview with her grandmother, and then she could scarce recognise in the shrunken querulous old figure the former terror of herself and the Priors' household. Old Madam's day was all but done; and before the Christmas time came round, Lord Downham was forced to leave the gaieties of town and assemble his family at Nanton to pay the only respect that this world would ever let fall to his mother's share.

After the funeral was over, urged to it by the suggestions of his elder daughters, Lord Downham asked Sarah if it would not be more agreeable to her to remove to London, a proposal which, to his great relief, she immediately rejected, saying it was her wish, so long as her presence there gave no inconvenience, to remain in the country.

Lord Downham hastened to express his plea-

sure at this wise decision, "For," said he, "now that thy grandmother is at rest, or rather that we are at rest concerning her, 'tis my intention to have my town house set in order, and gather round me my friends and supporters. What sayest thou to keeping house for a Cabinet Minister, eh? No bad training for a future Duchess, eh? Out upon his luck," he added with a laugh; "after all, Torbolton got the best of the bargain; 'tis no small gain to him at this time, that his son is wed to her grace of Marlborough's god-child, not that she hath much remembrance of thee; neither do I intend her to have, until she present thee at Court. Odds fish!" he exclaimed, as Sarah rose to curtsey her leave, "but thou'st changed a bit, lass, since the day we turned thee into a Countess. Lord! what a figure you cut then. Small wonder that thy groom turned lack-a-day, and ran from his bride as though she'd been a Blenheim trooper,"

Notwithstanding the outrage such jokes made upon Sarah's feelings, she managed to maintain her silence until she found herself alone with her dear Mrs. Harcourt, whose good sense invariably found some means of soothing the poor girl's wounded love and pride. Neither of them felt much concern on the score of this new proposition of residing with Lord Downham, as they were both assured that the forthcoming season would see Lady Torbolton again located in town; and directly any further change took place at Priors, Sarah was to take up her abode with the Duchess, whose love for her daughter-in-law seemed increased by the favourable reports which Mrs. Harcourt was constantly sending. But events were looming which, though doomed at first only to retard Lady Torbolton's return, ended in making her and her lord, in all but name, exiles from England, and obliged Lord Rosemont to allow his love of travel to serve as the given excuse for his prolonged absence. Thus Lady Sarah was thrown entirely upon her father's hospitality and protection.

Without being confessedly mixed up in the unhappy failure of 1715, Lord Torbolton was known to be friends with all its staunchest partisans. Lord Bolingbroke and he had been boon companions, the Earl of Mar was a near connection. From the time of the Hanoverian succession the Duke had never been seen at Court, and immediately prior to Queen Anne's death he had with-

drawn himself from London. Evidence so presumptive making prudence necessary, their friends advised them to withdraw for a time to some place abroad, where they could remain in obscurity until their real, or supposed, disaffection had died out of memory. Following this advice, Lord and Lady Torbolton had retired to Geneva, where, though three years had elapsed, they still remained.

In the meantime Lord Downham had been rapidly working his way into favour, and was now one of the most popular of the king's ministers. A wonderful change had taken place in him since, as "Blustering Dick," he was known as chief of a set of roisterers and gamblers. The haunts where his presence had been so familiar would never have recognised their old frequenter under the new garb of respectability with which prosperity had clothed him. Except at a quiet game of quadrille he never touched a card.

Downham House, fitted up in the most approved style, was thrown open to all who sought favour with the king; its hospitality dispensed by one who had become a reigning toast, and who, though known to be a married woman, still went under the name of Lady Sarah Downham. Many were the stories circulated about this marriage—the true circumstance not being guessed at by anyone. Some reported that the lady had run off with the bridegroom in defiance of her father's will; others had it that the two had parted at the church door, she refusing to live with him. On one point all were agreed, that the separation came from the wife—no man could voluntarily neglect and avoid a woman so elegant and winning.

Fortunately for the preservation of this mystery, Lord Downham was anxious to hide the trickery of which, formerly, he would have boasted. He was beginning to see himself in the light in which respectable folk had seen him, and he winced under several acts of his remarkable sharpness. Foremost among these stood the marriage of Lady Sarah, which, even had it come about in the usual order of things, was a union he would now have bitterly deplored. As he now stood, Lady Sarah would be welcomed into any family. Not a few noble titles only waited a word of encouragement, and they would be laid at her feet; and through his short-sighted chicanery his child was tied to a beggarly exile, who, having taken her as a necessity, treated her as an incumbrance.

to have the marriage dissolved, but the proposal was met by an absolute refusal from Sarah, who, for the first time, spoke in plain terms to her father, telling him that, unless it pleased Lord Rosemont to disown her, it would be the study of her life to grow worthy of him. Should he return and desire to be set free, free she would set him: in which case her days should be spent in widowhood: no other living man should ever call her wife. Strange as it seemed even to himself, as time went on, his formerly neglected child had so won him that her happiness began to be essential to his own, added to which he greatly desired to secure Mrs. Harcourt's favour; and any good service rendered to the Torboltons might incline that clever, quiet lady to lend a more willing ear to his suit. It was she who impressed on him that, unknown to Lord Rosemont, Sarah's heart was in his keeping, and that all the girl did or strove after was guided by the hope of one day winning his love. So after vacillatingmaking up his mind and drawing back-Lord Downham had several interviews with the king; the result being that a communication was made with the Duke of Torbolton, intimating that if his inclinations made him desire to return to England and pay his respects to his sovereign, he might count on being graciously received, and that a similar favour would be extended to his son, Lord Rosemont, provided he came back with all speed from America, in which country it was believed he was travelling. The receipt of that letter filled the Duke with such joy that all trace of the bitter resentment he had up till now felt for Lord Downham vanished;

Finding that she had no desire to be called by

her husband's title, Lord Downham had proposed

The receipt of that letter filled the Duke with such joy that all trace of the bitter resentment he had up till now felt for Lord Downham vanished; suffering from a malady, which he believed a residence in his own country might possibly cure, the prospect of return from exile seemed to give back all his health and vigour. He hardly allowed the Duchess time to make the necessary arrangements, and in less than a month the noble pair were installed in their old home at Bloomsbury. The sight of the improved appearance in Lady Sarah filled the Duchess with delighted surprise. She declared that her style was perfect, her manner faultless, and, added good Mistress Harcourt, "her heart as sound as when you parted with her. Indeed, dear Madam, I think now we have no cause for uneasiness on the score of her failing to

please her lord, although his absence had made him grow a thousand times more fastidious than 'twas his wont to be."

The Duchess sighed. "My impatience for his return," she said, "increases every moment. Sir Hans Sloane saw my dear lord yesterday, and but confirmed the fear that has long lain heavy in my breast, that his sickness is a fatal one—not necessarily immediate—but still it behoves his son to be near, that he may learn his wishes and admire his fortitude."

"I may venture to tell your grace," said Mrs. Harcourt, "how singular is the alteration I find in him."

"Dear friend," smiled the Duchess, "during the past years, in all save our banishment from the land so dear to us, my life has been one of renewed happiness and love. The Duke's very nature seems changed, and his days are spent in devotion to my smallest wish." Then, after a pause, she added: "How can I fail to hang upon the hope that my boy, who has done all this for me, shall yet meet his reward."

"Tis strange," said Mrs. Harcourt, "how completely his image fills Sarah's heart; his devotion to your grace, his ready sacrifice to the Duke's honour, all has taken possession of her romantic nature, and called forth the love of her sympathetic heart; but here comes the coquette," she cried, as Lady Sarah was announced, "wanting to distract us both with a sight of her Italian straw hat, and new mantua and petticoat of French brocade. Oh! fie upon thee for the vain puss thou art."

Lady Sarah made a deep curtsey. "My service to you, Madams." Then springing up she said, with a funny little grimace: "'Tis fit you call me vain, for I vow my days are spent in looking in the glass trying to discover how much truth lies in the specches some good-hearted folk use to prop my failing courage with."

Poor Sarah, she felt ready to cling to any support as the time for Lord Rosemont's return drew near.

Immediately on receipt of his mother's letter he had written to say he would return to England with all possible speed, and the time of his expected arrival was now close at hand. Lord Rosemont, in company with many who had suffered in the Pretender's cause, had made his exile an excuse for visiting America; a country which gave a

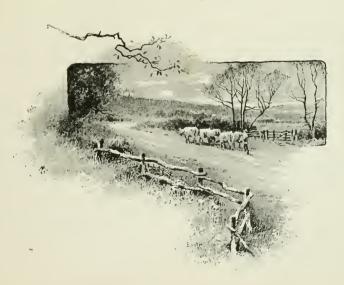
welcome to all who needed or chose to make a new home. Charmed with the simplicity of those who, years before, when suffering in a political cause, had turned their steps thither, he almost resolved to settle there, and with this in view he lingered, going here and there to visit each spot he heard spoken of in terms of praise. Hitherto his mother had but hinted at the Duke's malady, but in this last letter she had not hesitated to communicate her well-founded fears.

Immediately Lord Rosemont began to reproach himself for these years of absence. More than four had elapsed since he had seen either his father or his mother. He did nothing but tell himself that he had been selfish, undutiful, thinking only of his own pleasure, and unmindful of the happiness of those nearest to him. He turned to his mother's former letters and read them all carefully through again, trying to discover whether he had overlooked any sentence that might have been construed into a recall, and by the few words relating to Lady Sarah he was reminded of a tie he was fain to forget. Except in his first letter, when he had begged his mother to make for him

all the monetary arrangements necessary, he had kept to what he said was his intention, and had never again mentioned her name. In each letter the Duchess made a point of saying that she had received word that Lady Sarah was well, that she was at Nanton or in London; but never a remark did this draw from her son, whose aim was to forget the very existence of his incubus, and, as he fancied this would be best effected by shunning the sex to which she belonged, he studiously avoided any society where it was likely he should find ladies.

For the past two years his temptations had been few, and when, after a particularly stormy and speedy voyage, he finally stepped on shore at Bristol, he declared himself to have so far forgotten the usages of civilisation that he was covered with chagrin at the thought of the formidable array of ceremony sure to await the reinstatement of his position. However, no matter what might be his resolves for the future, for the present his duty was to inform his mother of his arrival, and hasten with all speed to London, which place he expected to reach in about three days after the date of writing.

(To be continued.)



ATALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

Subject for July—" Is the belief in ghosts justifiable?" Papers not to exceed five hundred words and to be sent in on or before July 25th. The best paper on either side will be published in the magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Describe a girl's hesitation in the choice of two lovers, and her decision. Give an estimate of the character of *Shirley*. Write a Song on the Sea, of sixteen lines, suitable for music. Members can only enter for one of these subjects. Essays not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before July 25th.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (JUNE).

1.

1. It is first found in the mediaval Greek Romance of Barlaam and Josaphat, by Joannes Damascenus (about A.D. 800). It is also told by the English poet, Gower, and the Italian novelist, Boccacio.

2. The points of resemblance are most striking in the collection of storics, most popular in the Middle Ages, the Gesta Romanorum.

II.

1. Aubrey de Vere (the younger). 2. Edward Cracraft Lefroy.

111.

To Colonel Burnaby—by Andrew Lang.
 To Dante—by Richard Garnett.

1. William Motherwell. 2. Gerald Griffin. 3. Sir Walter Raleigh.

v.

Supposed to be a MS, written in the time of Henry VIII.

VI

1. To Doctor Johnson. 2. Mr. Lorry, in Dickens's Tale of Two Cities.

SEARCH QUESTIONS (JULY).

I.

1. Which was the first collected edition of Shakespere's plays? By whom was it set forth?

2. To whom was this edition dedicated?

II.

On whose gravestone is this inscription—
 "Good frend, for Jesus sake forbeare

To digg the dust enclosed heare;
Bleste be the man that spares thes stones,
And curst be he that moves my bones"?

2. To whom also is it attributed?

TTT

1. Who is described in these lines-

"Mirror of poets! mirror of our age!
Which her whole face beholding on thy stage,
Pleased, and displeased, with her own faults, endures,
A remedy like those whom music cures"?

2. By whom were they written?

IV.

1. Give authors of the following quotations-

"The sun hath twice brought forth his tender green, Twice clad the earth in lively lustiness; Once have the winds the trees despoiled clean, And once again begins their cruelness; Since I have hid under my breast the harm That never shall recover healthfulness,"

- Good morrow to the day so fair,
 Good morrow, sir, to you;
 Good morrow to my own torn hair
 Bedabbled with the dew,"
- "Give me more love, or more disdain;
 The torrid or the frozen zone,
 Brings equal ease unto my pain;
 The temperate affords me none;
 Either extreme, of love, or hate,
 Is sweeter than a calm estate."

V.

By whom were the sonnets written, beginning-

"Love that is dead and buried, yesterday
 Out of his grave rose up before my face,
 No recognition in his look, no trace
 Of memory in his eyes dust-dimmed and grey"?

 "Under the arch of Life, where love and death, Terror and mystery, guard her shrine, I saw Beauty enthroned; and though her gaze struck awe, I drew it in as simply as my breath"?

VI

What two personages are described in these lines, from the Chaldee Manuscript, which appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine?*

1. "The first that came was in the likeness of the beautiful leopard from the valley of the palm-trees, whose going forth was comely as the greyhound, and his eye like lightning of fiery flame."

2. "Then came also from a far country the scorpion, which delighteth to sting the faces of men . . ."





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CHAPTER XXXI.

RAYMOND'S REWARD.

UMBERING on over a rough, uneven road, made almost impassable by the six inches of snow that lay upon it, came the stage-coach from Edinburgh on a dark night in December. Ever since leaving the town the snow had been falling; a fact to which the habiliments of the drivers bore indisputable testimony, not to mention the poor horses themselves, whose harness was now double its original weight. The coach itself looked like one huge snowball rolling heavily along.

The few passengers it conveyed were doing their best to keep themselves warm inside. One or two, wrapped over head and ears in cloaks and rugs, had even managed to go to sleep; though their slumbers proved generally of brief duration, owing to the violent jolting of the vehicle at times, when it plunged into some treacherously concealed hollow.

At this particular moment it gave a great lurch, and swayed from side to side for a second or two, as if uncertain whether to topple over or not. The sleepers all started up in bewilderment and fright, some of them rushing to the door and scrambling down among the snow. Nothing serious had happened, however, except the smashing of one of the lamps. Nevertheless the guard's assurance could hardly induce them to resume their seats, until they had examined the horses and the wheels of the coach for themselves.

While they were thus engaged, and the drivers were fuming at the delay, and venting their impatience in language by no means complimentary to the faithless passengers, a slim youth, addressing the guard, asked:

"How long will it be before we reach the last stage?"

"If we get to Lynnburgh afore midnicht, ye may be thankfu'," was the gruff reply. "We've lost mair than an hoor-and-a-half already, an' if the snaw-drift keeps as thick as this, we're likely to lose as muckle mair.—Come awa' there," he added, calling to the lingerers outside; "we canna bide here a' nicht, unless ye want to mak' yer beds amang the snaw."

Thus adjured, the affrighted passengers took their places; and the conveyance, with a preliminary jolting and creaking, began its journey on wards.

To one of the passengers it was the dreariest journey he had ever made. This was the young man who had asked when the last stage would be reached, and who now kept anxiously peering through the dense darkness for the first glimpse of lights in the distance. No drowsiness had oppressed him all that day; on the contrary, he seemed hardly able to curb his impatience, and kept restlessly shifting his position, to the evident discomfort of his fellow-travellers, whose repose he frequently interrupted. But when at last the postilion blew his horn to announce that they were nearing their destination, and all began to bestir themselves and make preparations for leaving the coach, he got so excited, that several regarded him with suspicion, as a youthful delinquent who was anxious to make good his escape from his pursuers.

When at last they drove into the silent, snowmuffled town, whose deserted streets were but faintly lighted by the lamps still burning in one or two windows, and finally drew up at the inn, around which a small group of expectant ostlers and servants were gathered, this restless traveller was the first to alight. But instead of hastening into the inviting warmth and brightness of the inn, he accosted one of the grooms with the question:

" How far is it from here to Glenathole?"

"Ye're suirly no thinkin' o' gaun there the nicht?" was the reply.

"Yes, I must," he rejoined; "and I want a conveyance at once. Can you provide me with one?"

After some difficulty, arising chiefly from the persistent attempts of mine host to dissuade this promising guest from proceeding further that night, a gig was procured, and he was driven off again over the solitary, snow-clad plain to Glenathole.

Never before had he experienced such a feeling of awe as amid the loneliness and silence of this wintry scene; nothing around him but the unbroken sweep of snow-clad moorlands; no sound audible save the hoarse murmur of the sea in the distance. The very trees, as they passed them, had a ghostly look, with their gaunt, bare branches draped fantastically in snow, and stretched out overhead like menacing arms.

"Are we near Glenathole now?" inquired the stranger, as they approached the white, shadowy hills, on the side of one of which lay the village in question.

"Ay, we're no far frae 't noo," was the answer; but I doot ye'll find the folk a' in their beds by this time. Ye'll hae somebody waitin' for ye, I reckon?"

"I'm going to the Manse—to Mr. Dunbar's: can you take me there?"

"Ou, ay; it's a weel-kent place the Manse; but it's up the hill a bit, an' I'm no suir aboot riskin' the beast. I doot ye'll hae to sclimb yersel'."

"I can easily do that: only show me the place, and then you may drive home as fast as you can."

A few minutes more, and they reached their destination.

"Ye canna gang wrang," declared the guide, as his companion alighted at the oot of the hill; "for it's the first hoose ye come to, and the only ane for about quarter o' a mile roond."

The young man thanked him, and, after rewarding him with a reckless munificence which proved him unversed in the ways of the world, began his ascent to the minister's abode.

This was by no means so easy a process, however, as he had imagined, for the snow was kneedeep, and his limbs, cramped with the long journey of that day, were beginning to get numbed with the cold, and moved somewhat tardily. He was therefore glad when a cheering light sent its rays across the pathless snow, and he found himself at last near his destination.

"Just what he described it to be," he said to himself, as he pushed open the little gate at the end of the garden-path, and slowly advanced to the door of the humble dwelling. The light which had guided his steps shone from one of the latticed windows, and, peeping in, he saw the venerable minister seated at a table covered with books and papers, among which he seemed wholly engrossed, as was evinced by the earnest expression of his fine, serene countenance.

The unseen observer continued gazing for several minutes ere he reluctantly quitted his post, and then, timidly at first, knocked for admittance. The knock won no response, and he repeated it with more emphasis. Then he heard voices inside, one of which was raised in tones of expostulation, whose shrillness left no doubt that it did not belong to the minister. Presently it called through the keyhole:

"Wha's that at this time o' nicht?"

"A friend from Edinburgh who wishes to see Mr. Dunbar," was the modest reply, uttered in tones which might have allayed the housekeeper's ears of burglary.

But in the same distrustful voice she retorted:

"Ay, a likely story! If ye waanted to see Mr. Dunbar, could ye no hae come in broad daylicht? Nae honest body comes chapin' at folks' doors at deed o' nicht. Gang awa' wi' ye, or I'll fling a can o' bilin' waater on yer heid."

A brisk altercation seemed to ensue, before at length the key was turned in the lock, and the mild voice of the minister himself inquired:

"Will you be good enough to mention your name before I open the door?"

"I am Bertram Norton from Edinburgh," was the reply.

Immediately the door was opened, and the old man, stretching out his hands towards the snowbesprinkled figure on the threshold, bade him welcome, and brought him into the friendly shelter of his home.

At the same moment a gaunt figure enveloped in grotesque raiment whisked itself out of sight, at the other end of the passage.

"Step in, sir," said Mr. Dunbar, closing the door behind the visitor; then, noticing his garments, he exclaimed:

"Dear me, what a cold journey you must have had! Was the coach blocked up by the snow?"

"Very nearly," replied the traveller. "We were three hours behind time, else I should not have disturbed you at this late hour. I suppose you have heard of me, though we have not met before?" he added, as he followed his host into the study.

"Many, many a time," answered Mr. Dunbar, warmly. "My son Raymond has told me so much of you and your disinterested friendship for him, that I seem to have known you all these years. Just draw in your chair to the fire (I am sorry it has got so low), and I will tell Peggy to make a cup of coffee for you; you must be both famished and shivering, after so long a journey in weather like this."

In vain Bertram protested against this proposal, convinced that it must be anything but acceptable to the churlish Abigail, of whose hospitality he could form no very sanguine views after the uninviting interview lately held with her through the keyhole. Mr. Dunbar would not listen, and the refreshment was brought in very soon afterwards by Peggy herself, whose fierceness had somehow vanished and been replaced by an aspect almost friendly, as she surveyed the visitor of whom she had frequently heard before.

The fire had been replenished, and, his supper slightly partaken of (for somehow he could not eat that night), Bertram took the seat placed for him before it, and, with marked reluctance, said:

"You have not yet asked me why I came here, Mr. Dunbar."

"It was not necessary," was the courteous reply: "friends are always welcome here; and none could be more welcome than you."

Bertram made a nervous movement and bit his lip.

His discomposure arrested Mr. Dunbar's attention, and, surprised at his embarrassed silence, he asked, in a tone of misgiving:

"I hope no untoward event has caused you to make this journey in weather so inclement?"

There was a slight tremor in the voice which betrayed greater apprehension than was expressed; and he bent on his visitor a look of keen scrutiny, from which he shrank.

Not for several moments could he return an answer, and, when he did so, he avoided meeting that searching look of awakening dread on the old man's face.

"I am very sorry," he began, speaking with manifest difficulty, "very sorry to be the bearer of sad news."

Mr. Dunbar leaned forward, his lips quivering, and asked:

"Have you come to tell me that Raymond—is—"

He could not speak the word, for at that moment there had rushed back upon his heart the memory of his wife's death, which had come so suddenly at the last, after what seemed a revival of strength. And Raymond, whose health had been improving during the past few months, as all believed—had he, like his mother, suddenly succumbed to the fell disease which he had inherited from her? The extreme pain visible on the young face opposite appeared to confirm the terrible fear, and the father's heart almost suspended its beating during the few seconds that elapsed before the answer came.

"He is very ill," said Bertram, a tear glistening on his eyelid, and his sensitive mouth beginning to work nervously.

"Have you just come from him?" inquired Mr. Dunbar, battling with the rising tumult of grief within his breast.

"Yes, I have travelled night and day," was the answer. "He sent for me, saying he was dy—very ill, and I went to London that same day. I found him worse than I expected. He asked me to do him a great service, and that was, that I would come and break the news to you, and bring you as soon as possible to London. He told me, too, that, if it were possible, he would like Miss Errol to come also. I set off at once, for I saw no time was to be lost."

There was a long pause of silence; then Mr.

Dunbar rose, and, leaning for support on the back of his chair, said, in trembling accents:

"My young friend, God has seen fit to take away the light of my eyes and the one bright hope of my declining years. I dare not murmur, for I know He doeth all things well; but my soul is full at this moment of exceeding anguish. You will pardon my withdrawal.—Your room is prepared for you upstairs next to my own.—Good-night. To-morrow morning we will begin our journey."

And wringing Bertram's hand with a pressure that told both of grief and affection, the old man left the room.

But all through the hours of that dreary night, Bertram heard him wrestling as in prayer; and when again they met next day he saw that he had prevailed: with the grief there had come to the aged pilgrim's heart a divine calm, a settled fortitude, not to be shaken even by the crucial test of an ordeal more cruel than death. For such to him was the loss of an only son.

Dawn had not yet broken in the eastern sky when Mr. Dunbar with his young companion knocked at the door of Cliff Cottage.

Mary had not come downstairs, but when Betsy, with a face of ill-disguised alarm, announced that "the minister an' a young bit callant" were waiting below, and wished to see her at once, she made haste to answer the summons.

Whenever her eye fell on Bertram Norton, whom she had no difficulty in identifying (though she had never seen him before), simply through Raymond's graphic descriptions, the conviction that evil tidings had brought him there, rose full formed within her, The sad look on his face further confirmed the impression, as he came forward to receive the greeting she extended to him.

Instinctively she glanced at her other visitor, on whose face she read traces of recent struggle and anguish; and the truth darted with arrow-like swiftness to her heart.

Mr. Dunbar led her apart, and in a voice that quivered despite himself, told her of their errand.

Like the fading of the sunset glow rom a landscape; like the extinction of the flame in a lamp, was the change that passed upon the face of Mary Errol as she heard that her lover was dying. The landscape and the lamp remain essentially the same after the illumination ceases; but the living charm is gone; so, from that hour the shadow of grief fell upon Mary's face, which would never more brighten as it had been wont to do under the smile of joy and hope.

She did not faint or give way to hysterical weeping. A spasm of sharp pain crossed her features for a moment, but that was the only indication of suffering they saw. Calmly she went to get ready for her journey, as if it had been long foreseen.

"No wonder he loved her," thought Bertram, as he beheld the noble fortitude she displayed at that terrible moment. "I knew she must have been a heroine to win the love of such a man."

It was an opinion destined to be still further confirmed, as throughout their dreary journey to London he observed her self-forgetfulness, her devotion to Mr. Dunbar, and the brave constancy with which she kept her own sorrow hidden deep down in her heart.

The last day of the old year was waning when they reached their destination. To their spirits, so eager to be with that departing one, how slow and tedious had the journey seemed! And now that it was over, they lost not a moment in hastening to the place where they were to take their final farewell of him.

It had been arranged that Bertram Norton should announce the arrival of his two companions, and prepare Raymond for the meeting. Accordingly, on their arrival, he went softly into the chamber where lay his beloved friend.

Oh! that awful shadow, cast by the wing of the destroying angel! Who that has seen it on the face of some dear one, can ever forget it? Bertram recognised the dread ensign of death on that calm, beautiful face, with a shudder of horror. It was the first time he had been brought into contact with it, and his sensitive soul recoiled in an agony of grief and fear from the approach of "the king of terrors."

Until this moment he had not realised that his friend was so near the portals of the unseen world. What a change even within the few days which had elapsed since last he saw him! The pale, marble brow on which already the dews of death were gathering; the hollow, sunken cheeks with their burning flush of crimson; the heavy, laboured breathing—all told that the sands of life were fast running out.

A sob burst from the watcher's lips, which immediately awoke the sleeper. The large, lustrous

eyes opened and fixed themselves with a glad look of recognition on Bertram, who stooped down to take the wasted hand extended to him.

"Bertram—have they come?" were the first faint words.

"Yes; they are here," answered the young lad.
"Shall I bring them in?"

A wave of colour passed over the thin face, leaving it paler than before, and a troubled expression replaced the deep repose it had recently worn.

"Wait a moment," he gasped, "till—I'm—calmer."

Bertram took a seat by the bedside, retaining in his grasp Raymond's hand, until he should bid him go for the others.

Presently the behest came: "Tell my father I want to see him first;" and Bertram went quickly out to deliver the message.

He found Mr. Dunbar pacing restlessly up and down the floor of the adjoining apartment, his head bent down on his breast, and his hands clenched behind his back; while Mary Errol sat rigid and still beside the small fire burning in the grate, her eyes fixed in deep abstraction on the flickering embers, from which the blaze was fast dying out.

"He wishes to see you first, sir," said Bertram; and the old man instantly followed him from the room.

Bertram, closing the door behind them, took hold of Mr. Dunbar's arm, and whispered:

"He seems much worse since I saw him last: you must prepare to find him very ill."

"Yes, yes; but let me go to him," was the broken-hearted reply, as the father hastened into the apartment where lay his dying boy.

Bertram withdrew, unable to endure more than a momentary glimpse of that agonised embrace, as the old man fell on his knees beside the bed, and gathered to his aching heart the son he had loved so well.

"Oh, Ray! Ray! why did you never tell me of this?" moaned he in accents of bitter grief.

"It came on me suddenly, father," was the reply.
"I thought I was going to—to be spared to you and—Mary; but God has willed otherwise; don't make it harder for me to say Amen."

"God forbid, my son! But oh! my soul is exceeding sorrowful. How willingly would I have given my life for yours!" cried the father, overwhelmed with anguish.

But Raymond's distress was such, that he checked the violence of his grief, and strove to be calm.

After a while, Raymond said, in a low, irregular voice:

"I thought I would be allowed to struggle longer in the great battle Christians have to fight in this world; I wanted to fight for the Captain of my salvation; but He has thought best to summon me from the ranks when I had just buckled on my armour, and I have few trophies to lay at His feet. Yet He knows I was eager to serve Him, and that I valued His approval above all things; and though I have so ill deserved it, I believe He will welcome me yonder with His 'well done.'"

"Ay, it never was yet withheld from any that truly sought it," said Mr. Dunbar; "and you sought it very early, Ray."

"You taught me to seek it," continued the dying youth; "and I'll bless you for it to all eternity." Then, after a pause, he resumed: "But oh! the bitterness of death is the parting with you and Mary. I can truly say:

'I leave the world without a tear, Save for the friends I hold so dear.'"

Oh! how those familiar words thrilled the old man's heart! words associated with all the deepest experiences of his life. He had heard them whispered by the lips of his dying wife, after she had placed her infant son in his arms, saying, "Train him for God and heaven." And now that son too was leaving him to rejoin her there. Oh! could he but have crossed the river with him!

As if he had read his thoughts, Raymond calmly said:

"Courage, father; it's but for a little while; and think of the glorious meeting."

"Yes, oh yes, my son; it cannot be far off now. I will follow you soon to our Father's house; and death cannot enter there."

A slight motion behind them caused them to look round. It was the doctor who had come in, and was about to withdraw again on seeing the white-headed, venerable man kneeling at the bedside. But Mr. Dunbar rose and beckoned him to approach.

A glance at his patient's face and a minute's pressure on the pulse told him further excitement would be dangerous, and he suggested that he should be left perfectly quiet for the rest of the evening.

Raymond heard this verdict with an appealing look very hard to resist; but the medical man would not allow him to see any one else that night, and with a sigh of piteous disappointment he yielded to the hard decision.

When it was made known to Mary, she made no protest of any kind. That strange stunned sensation that comes to us under sudden calamity had paralysed all her senses and frozen the springs of celing for the time being. But all through that dreary night, as she lay awake in the chamber set apart for her in view of her coming by Raymond's foresight, there pressed upon her soul, like some crushing weight, the thought of that dark river so soon to sever her from her soul's beloved. Already she seemed to hear its dull, ominous sound, and to eel its penetrating chill descend like a blight upon her soul.

About five o'clock in the morning a tap came to her door, and Mr. Dunbar's voice called to her in an awed whisper:

" Mary, can you come now? He wants to see you."

She was soon ready, and, opening the door, she asked:

"Is he worse?"

The old man's trembling hand took hold of hers, but he could not speak.

She followed him to the room; but on the threshold she staggered, and had to lean against the door-post for support.

"Try to be calm, Mary," whispered Mr. Dunbar.

A moment's fierce struggle, and she was able to accompany him to Raymond's bedside.

He lay utterly prostrate, having recently suffered terrible paroxysms of pain, and his laboured breathing attested that they were not yet over.

Seeing Mary enter, he tried to raise himself, but strength failed, and he could only stretch out one emaciated hand, which she caught in hers, bathing it with tears. The sight of that hand had unlocked the floodgates of grief, which could no longer be controlled, once the surging tide had burst its barriers.

He could not utter any words of comfort, but his hand kept stroking the glossy tresses lying on his pillow, as she knelt beside him, bowed down under the sweeping storm that was now breaking over her soul. And his tears were raining down upon her head fast and thick. This was the bitterness of death for him, as he had said. The sound ot that racking, tearing cough which shook his frame, stemmed the torrent of Mary's tears, and made her look up in dreadful alarm. How she hated herself for having allowed one sob to escape from her bosom, when she beheld his sufferings!

The spasm passed, and when he had recovered sufficiently to speak, he said in a whisper:

"A little while ago, I thought I was—going. I can't linger long now, and I want to give you my last—message." Another pause of breathlessness, then he continued: "Mary, I'm going home first, but you'll come to me yonder—in our Father's house by-and-bye. God will give us back to one another—yonder, though we're parting now. I've loved you, my darling, all my life through, and I know you'll not forget me when I'm—gone."

"Oh! take me with you, my Raymond!" was the wild, imploring cry that burst from the girl's agonised heart.

It seemed to shake the ortitude of the departing spirit, struggling to be free from the chains that still bound it to earth. A moan of unutterable anguish broke from the dying lips, and for a brief while human feelings prevailed. But soon the cloud passed, and the sunshine of immortal faith broke out in fullest splendour.

"In God's good time, you'll come to me," he said, with a sublime calm that shamed all weakness into silence. "In our Saviour we have a bond of union nothing can destroy. Look to Him, Mary, trust in Him and He'll guide you safe—to the Promised Land." Then, pausing to take breath, he resumed, in altered tones, which grew every moment fainter: "My own Mary—there's one thing I would like you to do after——" He did not finish the sentence, but continued: "My dear old father—he'll be very lonely: will you take the place you were to have taken, and be a daughter to him?"

"I'll try," she answered. "He has been always like a father to me."

"Thank you, dear Mary," he murmured, "you have taken the last thorn rom my dying pillow.— And now, while I have breath, let me—give you my blessing. May the Good Shepherd take care of you, my darling, all your days. May His Holy Spirit rest and abide with you always, and may the peace that 'passeth all understanding' be yours now and evermore."

She tried to say "Amen," but her lips refused to do her bidding. Anguish unutterable was hers at that moment.

He drew her tace close to his own, and pressed a last kiss on her wet cheek. All the love of his soul seemed to shine out in that long, lingering gaze he bent upon her. She would carry the memory of it to her grave—a precious legacy of which neither time nor change could rob her. All through the years to come it would linger round her heart, like a pure light on a shrine, beautifying and hallowing.

"The wave of life kept heaving to and tro" a little while longer in the breast of the dying youth. He rallied during that day, and was able to speak with less pain. They remained with him constantly, at his own request; for it seemed to relieve him when he opened his eyes and found them near. Mary sat by his side, his hand clasped in her own, smoothing his pillow at times, or wiping the damp from his brow. He would hardly allow her to be absent for a moment.

Toward evening, Bertram Norton, who had been with him all day, prepared to take his leave for the night, thinking he ought not to intrude further. Raymond motioned to him to approach closer, and, when the boy had nestled into his side, he said:

"Bertram, you'll be a good soldier of Jesus Christ, won't you? and win the crown at last?"

"I'll try, sir," answered he, the tears gushing down his cheeks.

"Be true to the Captain of the great army," continued his friend, fixing a look of deep tenderness on the face which had so long been turned to him in appealing trustfulness and love. "And remember His is a cause that must prevail in the end,"

"I'll try, sir," was again poor Bertram's only response; for his heart was wrung with grief at the thought of parting with the friend from whom all the inspiration of his life had come, and whose sweet companionship was to him more precious than anything else on earth.

"Good-night, my dear lad," said Raymond, clasping the small sensitive hand that rested on his own. "God bless you."

Bertram tried to repeat the words, but failed. He stooped down and pressed a kiss on the pure, noble brow, then hastily left the room, unable to control himself any longer.

Mary saw her lover's eye moisten, as he watched the familiar form vanish. Did he know he would see it no more on earth?

Shortly afterwards he fell asleep.

The doctor came in and stood watching him intently for some time; but he would not disturb him, he said, at present, and promised to make another visit later in the evening.

About eleven o'clock Raymond awoke. Mary was still sitting close beside him, and he pressed her hand in token of satisfaction; but his eye roved round the room in quest of his father, who had lain down on a couch at Mary's request.

She was about to rise and summon him, when Raymond detained her, inquiring: "Is he asleep?"

Being told that he was, he said: "Don't wake him."

"Is it anything you wish?" she asked.

"Only his presence," he replied, "and to hear him read a few verses from the Bible. But don't disturb him yet. Mary," he added in a whisper, "my feet are growing cold: could you put a hotter jar to them?"

Quickly she obeyed, and he thanked her with a smile.

The slight sound awoke Mr. Dunbar, who came hastily to the bedside in alarm, lest his son had become worse.

But Raymond's smile reassured him. "Come to this side, father," he said, pointing to where Mary stood. And when Mr. Dunbar had complied, he took his hand, and, placing it in Mary's said: "Father, this is your daughter: she has promised, and she'll be a comfort to you when I am—gone."

The holiest compacts are those that are sealed with tears; and such was this between the betrothed of the dying and the old man, his father.

After a solemn pause, Raymond asked that a portion of the New Testament should be read to him.

Mr. Dunbar took up the sacred volume, and, seating himself opposite his son and Mary, inquired if there was any special passage he wished to hear.

"The fourteenth chapter of St. John," was the answer; "the sweetest message of God's love in all the Bible."

Pillowing his head on Mary's breast, he listened greedily to those precious words that have stayed many a pilgrim's heart in passing through the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

When those verses were read:—" In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again. and receive you unto Myself: that where I am, there ye may be also;—a smile serene and joyous passed over Raymond's face, and he pressed the hand that clasped his, as if to testify that he was proving the message true.

Are there any other words that can light up a dying face like those from this source divine?

In his impressive, reverential tones Mr. Dunbar continued reading, until he came to the end of the chapter. There he paused to see whether he should proceed further.

But Raymond's eyes had closed; and the father made a motion to Mary not to disturb him, now that he had fallen asleep.

She bent down to catch a better view of the face reclining on her bosom. Something in its aspect of deep repose arrested her, and looking closer, she saw that awful ashen hue creeping from the brow downwards. Her cheek touched that brow, which was cold as the marble it resembled. The delicate nostrils had ceased to dilate with the fleeting breath, and the chest no longer rose and fell. Then Mary knew that he was dead.

Do not pity her; for he died on her faithful breast, and the last smile that shone on his face was hers. In life he had been her own, and in death she felt they were not divided, though she might see his face no more till she saw it in the light of immortality. And the tears she shed over that "lovely ruin" had in them no bitterness, for she knew that in the dawning of the new life, God would restore her heart's beloved, and perfect the love that had been so sweet on earth. No: rather pity those for whom love has proved a more bitter thing than death; those who have had to mourn over a grave from which there is no resurrection—the grave of blasted hope and "murdered faith, that never lives again."

CHAPTER XXXII.

HAUNTED RUINS.

THERE are some people who prefer a limited and select circle of friends to one larger and more promiscuous; because they can thus make themselves acquainted with the minutest details in their character and habits. Acting on the principle that it is better to know a few things well than many things imperfectly, they confine themselves to those privileged few, flouting all the rest. And, ceteris paribus, theirs is doubtless the wiser course, and the most likely to satisfy the demands of friendship in the end. For the old adage still holds true: "A favourite has no friends." Nor will it be denied, even by those who have enjoyed the greatest popularity, that among their "troops of friends" there are but a few on whose attachment they can rely as likely to stand them in stead when their hour of need shall come.

To the class of which we speak belonged honest Betsy Heron, the housekeeper at Cliff Cottage. Her busy life had indisposed her for the cultivation of many friendships; but the few she had secured she retained with undeviating constancy. Those were restricted, however, to the members of her own sex. Toward men she manifested a contemptuous indifference, hardly less complimentary than the opinions she occasionally avowed respecting those enemies of the race, whom she unhesitatingly denominated "lee-ers like their faither," meaning, of course, the Devil.

Whether this inveterate antipathy originated in some unhappy youthful experience of a sentimental kind, was never accurately known even to those in whose service she had been during the greater part of her life. Her aspersions of the sex had once or twice taken a form specific enough to justify certain inferences, to which other obscure hints gave further confirmation; but the matter remained one of conjecture after all. What was certain was, that Betsy had, to use her own phrase, "a scunner at men"; and, when reprimanding what she considered lightness in the conduct of some village damsel, she generally enforced her remarks by saying with an air of unapproachable superiority: "Naebody could ever cast up tae me that I cairried on wi' men. Na, na; I ave thocht ower muckle o' mysel'."

With so strong a predilection for her own sex, and so rooted an aversion to the other, it may easily be surmised that her acquaintances were ot necessity few; for no sooner did she perceive the first indications of an attachment between any of them and a wearer of male attire than she quitted connection with the misguided woman after, perhaps, a piece of admonition not likely to be

cherished by the recipient on the eve of allying herself permanently with one declared to be the incarnation of the most appalling wickedness. And those in the enjoyment of single blessedness were comparatively few. Besides old Peggy Murdoch, there were but three other spinsters in the neighbourhood with whom Betsy was on visiting terms. Of these one was addicted to snuff, which circumstance seriously marred the amenity of their intercourse, the habit being peculiarly obnoxious to the punctilious Betsy. Another was so deaf that conversation with her could only be carried on at the risk of a sore throat; and her gross travesties of what she managed to hear were sometimes so aggravating, that her interlocutor lost patience, and made remarks which somehow always were heard. Then, again, the third, though still unwed, and never likely to be wed, had betraved a lingering tenderness toward the lords of creation, which nearly alienated the countenance and support of staunch Betsy Heron, and was in consequence relegated to a very obscure corner in her affections.

"Peggy o' the Manse," as residing nearest to Cliff Cottage, was awarded a larger share of attention than any of the other competitors for Betsy's favour; but then her parsimonious ways, and her unwillingness to admit the immeasurable superiority of the family at the cottage, proved sources of frequent wrangling, and thus made their intercourse somewhat precarious.

Of all Betsy's acquaintances none found so much acceptance with her as Effie Murray; but, alas! she had been ruined by the general doom, and become a wife. She, too, would have forfeited the housekeeper's friendship irretrievably, but for the fact that her husband speedily justified Betsy's prognostications, being in the habit of making merry of an evening in the village. Strangely enough, this circumstance reconciled the offended Betsy to her unfortunate friend, and paved the way for a renewal of their interrupted friendship. Whenever Effie was in trouble through the frequent lapses of her "gudeman," she used to send for Betsy, who seldom failed to respond to the summons, and usually found an opportunity of administering a few "words of comfort" to the offending David, which seemed greatly to overawe him for the time being.

Now it so happened that on a particular evening

in October, a summons of this nature had come to Betsy; and, having satisfactorily discharged her household duties, she asked permission of Mrs. Errol to "rin ower an eerrand to Effie Murray's." It was readily given, and she set out, provided with ammunition of a kind certain to demolish the enemy.

"It's a bonny staurlicht nicht," said she, as she got to the foot of the hill; "I'll jist gang roond by the shore. It's the nearest way onyway to Effe's.—I wun'er what that feckless loon o' a man has been daein' noo," she ruminated, as she went along toward the beach. "Anither blaw-oot, dootless; an' the puir hissy'll no hae a broon bawbee in a' the hoose. Weel, she jist deserves 't, for gaun in the face o' my advice. I'm suir I telt her weel what she micht expect frae a saft easy-oasy like Dauvit Murray—a muckle lowt wha gangs wi' a' the lave, an' ne'er the richt gait, to be suir. Aweel, she's made her bed, an' she maun jist lie in't. But, my certy! I'll gie him a bit o' my mind, the ill-staurred gowk!"

With this benevolent intention she quickened her pace, and was striding along like a grenadier, when all at once she drew herself up with as much alacrity as might have been displayed by that same member of the British army when suddenly confronted by the cannon's mouth.

"Gude preserve us a'! what's yon?" she exclaimed, looking upward to the heights on which stood Raxley Castle. "As I'm a leevin' wuman, I see lichts glintin' oot o' the auld Castle wundies! Mercy me! what'll I dae?"

Transfixed she stood, watching the fitful glimmer which played among the ruins, shining now out of this narrow window-slit, now out of that, as if proceeding from torches carried to and fro. But even as she gazed, the mysterious illumination vanished,

"And in a moment a' was dark."

Superstitious by nature, Betsy had little difficulty in coming to the conclusion that this was a visible confirmation of the belief long prevalent among the villagers, that Raxley Castle was haunted. The thought of its ghostly visitants brought a cold, creeping chill over her limbs, which trembled so violently, that she could scarcely proceed. Rallying herself, however, she made a determined effort to cross the belt of sand that lay between her and her destination.

Breathless and excited, she at last ound herself at the door of Murray's cottage, and after an imperative rat-tat, was admitted by the delinquent himself, whose bluff, good-natured face instantly lengthened on beholding the austere visitor.

The reprimand, however, which he expected did not come; instead thereof Betsy took him by the arm, and said in tones that commanded immediate attention:

"Put on yer bonnet, Dauvit, and come awa' wi' me. I've seen a sicht that's maist foon'ered me."

"Losh, Betsy wuman, what's gane wrang wi' ye?" exclaimed Mrs. Murray, amazed at this untoward demonstration on the part of one usually so composed and self-possessed.

She was a little fair-haired woman, with soft blue eyes and a sweet expression of face; and as she trotted up with a chair for her guest, she looked all anxiety to know what had occurred to shake the equanimity of so staid a personage.

"What's wrang wi' me?" reiterated Betsy, sinking on the proffered seat, and loosening the strings of her capacious bonnet; "My certy! gin ye had seen what I saw the noo, ye wadna speer. Mony a time I've h'ard the folk say, Auld Clootie had a lease o' the Castle up bye; but I ne'er thocht my cen wad get a keek o' his caun'les. As suir's ye're standin' there, Effie, I saw the auld wundies a' ableeze wi' licht, as I was comin' alang the shore: it maist took the braith frae me."

Effie Murray's face grew pale with fright, and she looked apprehensively toward her husband, who, however, exhibited an exasperating stolidity, which it was fortunate Betsy did not see.

"Are ye suir it wasna the mune?" suggested this intrepid auditor. "I've whiles seen 't glintin' on the stanes sae bright, ye wad hae thocht——"

"The mune, ye muckle gowk!" wrathfully exclaimed Betsy, wheeling round upon the speaker in supreme scorn. "Do ye think I'm sae blin', I dinna ken munelicht frae caun'les? It's no every nicht ye wad ken the difference."

This unexpected allusion to his weakness instantly quelled poor David's spirit of banter, and reduced him to respectful silence.

But Betsy continued in the same strain:

"Gin ye're sae stoot a chiel, ye'll maybe obleege me by takin' me hame the nicht; an' if ye're no feared for wraiths, we'll gang doon by the shore, an' maybe ye'll see something up at the Castle a wee different frae munelicht."

"Oh, mercy! ye maunna tak' him oot the nicht!" remonstrated poor Effie, more afraid of another kind of spirits than of those Betsy had alluded to. For if her husband found his way into the village, it boded no good for her or him.

"Hoots, lass!" returned David, "what are ye feared for? Losh, I wad like to see the ghost that wad come within sax yards o' my neeve. Here, Betsy, my gude wuman, I'm ready for ye."

"Ye muckle tawpie!" said Betsy to the solicitous Effie, who began to show symptoms of weeping. "I'm suir he hasna been sic a god-send to ye, that ye sude fash yer heid sae muckle aboot him. If I was in yer place, I wad reckon't naething less than a blessin' to won quat o' him."

"Ay, but ye dinna ken what it is to be mairried," whimpered the disconsolate wife.

"No, thank the Lord! an' never wull!" was Betsy's fervent ejaculation, as she whisked her bonnet-strings under her chin, and rose to depart.

"I'll be hame in a jiffy," said David to his wife, reassuringly; but she saw him go off with terrible misgivings at her heart, her only consolation being that his companion might administer some wholesome advice, and scare him into compliance.

Nor was she mistaken in the former supposition at anyrate; for, as they went along, Betsy seized the opportunity to speak her mind with the usual plainness.

"An' so ye've been makin' a beast o' yersel' again," she began. "Ye're a bonny-like character to be a faither. If yer puir bits o' weans tak' an exaimple frae their faither, they'll be a credit to ye, an' nae mistake. I warrant, gin puir Effie had kent what men are, as weel as I dae, she wad hae been Effie Stinston a' her days; but she was ta'en in, like the lave, wi' a wheen claverin' lees, an' thocht, dootless, because ye were sae saft-spoken an' douce, ye wadna be different after ye got her. She sees she has been sair mista'en, puir thing! For men can mak' themsel's angels o' licht as weel as their faither, the Prince o' Darkness, as he's ca'ed in Scripture.-Ay, ye're laughin'; but ye'll no laugh muckle when he gies ye the wages ye're earnin' sae weel the noo. I wun'er ye dinna think shame, Dauvit Murray, to think ye wad tak' the breed frae the mooths o' yer wife an' weans, an' spend it a' in makin' yersel' waur than a dumb brute! A brute? I sude raither say, like the de'il himselt. I ken what ye'll come to, my man; I've seen what drink can dae to better an' brawer men than you; an' if ye dinna gie ower thae shamefu' ways, ye'll end yer days on the scaffold, mind I'm tellin' ye."

She paused for want of breath, and saw, to her unbounded indignation, that, so far from benefiting from her admonitions, her companion seemed oblivious of her very presence, and had his eyes fixed on some object in the distance, which evidently interested him in no small degree.

"What are ye glowerin' at?" she sharply demanded, thinking at first he had seen something "uncanny"; for they were now in view of Raxley Castle.

"Wheesht! haud yer tongue!" was the unceremonious retort. "I thocht I saw something up yonder."

"Ay, I telt ye, ye wad see mair than ye bargained for," rejoined Betsy, triumphantly. "Ye'll no ca' yon munelicht?"

Both stood still to gaze at that strange, unearthly glimmer, which alternately rose and fell amid the gaunt ruins above.

"Fegs! ye were richt after a'," exclaimed Murray, turning to his companion, who had been grimly surveying the spectral illumination.

"Lippen tae a wuman's een for seein' through a stane wa'," was her rejoinder, as she tramped on before. "They're ne'er blin' except when they look at men—the vera time they wad need dooble sicht."

David indulged in a quiet laugh behind her back, before he said:

"Weel, Betsy wuman, we maun see the meanin' o' this. Ghosts or no, they hae nae richt yonder, an' I'll jist gang up an' tell them sae."

"Dauvit Murray, are ye clean daft?" demanded Betsy, confronting him with an air of condescending pity. "Div ye mean to say ye wad gang up yon'er an' fling yersel' suner than need be into the hands o' the de'il?"

"Hoots, wuman! ye're talkin' havers: wha but auld wives an' weans wad believe sic stories?" he returned, refusing to be daunted by even the prohibition of so strong an authority as Betsy Heron.

"Havers?" she re-echoed, indignantly. "Did ye ne'er hear o' what befell daft Kate, when she gaed up ae nicht to keek in at the Castle wundies, when they were lichted this way?"

"Ay, she was drooned, that was a'."

"If she was drooned, naebody e'er saw her body. Dinna tell *me* ony lees, Dauvit Murray; ye can keep them a' for puir Effie, wi' mair chance o' profit."

With a jerk of impatience, she was about to proceed, when again she observed her companion halt and scan a particular part of the shore.

"Canny, Betsy," he said, in a mysterious voice. "Look doon yon'er whaur the munelicht fa's on the sea, jist ablow the Castle."

Following the direction indicated, Betsy soon discovered what had attracted his attention. Just in the track of the moonlight, a black object was moving quickly out to sea. It was a boat rowed by two men, whose forms were sharply outlined against the brightness on the water.

"I dinna see onything to glower at," said she; "it's jist ane o' the fisherman's boats."

"That's no a place whaur ony o' us gang for fish," returned he; "an' yon's no ane o' oor boats. Do ye no' see it hasna a sail?"

The decisive tone with which he spoke aroused Betsy's curiosity, and she asked:

"Whatna boat is't, then?"

"Betsy, we're in the vera nick o' time," was the irrelevant answer. "We'll catch them noo."

"What in a' the worl' do ye mean!" exclaimed the astonished Betsy, staring at him as if he had gone mad.

"It's the smugglers!" he replied, excitedly. "That's the meanin' o' the lichts in the Castle."

"Losh! what wad they be daein' there?" exclaimed Betsy, in utter amazement.

"I dinna ken," replied David; "but Jock Dalgleish telt me he saw some men comin' doon frae the Castle ae nicht, an' a wee while after, he met Maister Lesly slinkin' aboot the same place. Onyway, seein's believin', an' I'll gang up an' mak' suir."

At the mention of that abhorred name, the old woman seemed suddenly transformed. Whereas she had been timid and apprehensive of her safety, she now began to exhibit a spirit of audacity which more than rivalled Murray's, and with a dexterity that amazed him, she took the lead, saving:

"Come awa', Dauvit, we'll gane thegither. I wad gang my lane for the chance o' layin' my hands on that hardened scoondrel. But for ony

sake, be canny, for if he gets haud o' us, he'll no mak' ony banes o' flingin' us into the waater. Hae ye onything aboot ye ye could defend yersel' wi', Dauvit?" she inquired, glancing at his hands, which unfortunately were empty.

"I'll no gie him the chance o' murderin' me the noo," was the cool rejoinder. "I'm jist gaun to mak' suir he's ane o' them. But we'll hae to ca' canny, Betsy wuman. 'Deed I wish ye hadna been here at a'. Are ye suir ye're no feared?"

"Did I no tell ye I wad gang my lane? Jist gie me a grip o' yer airm, for my legs arena sae soople as they were ance in a day."

Thus arm-in-arm they clambered up the steep ascent.

But when they had nearly reached the summit, the sound of loud, angry voices above them made them pause.

"Gudesake! they're comin' doon!" cried Betsy in sudden alarm, clutching at her companion's arm, "What'll we dae?"

"Dinna be feared," replied he. "We'll gang ahint that big rocks ower there, till they're by; an' we'll hear what they say—maybe as muckle as serves oor purpose."

So saying, he conducted the indefatigable Betsy to the aforesaid rocks, which provided liberal accommodation for the small ambuscade.

Meanwhile the sounds they had heard grew every moment louder. A violent dispute was evidently going on between two men, one of whose voices sent a tremor all over honest Betsy's frame, as she crouched down in her place of concealment. It was the voice of him who had brought ruin and misery on the house to which she bore a sort of feudal attachment; and her very soul recoiled as she listened to it. Was it possible that at last vengeance for this diabolical villainy was within her reach? Was hers to be the hand to inflict it? If so, she would not have lived in vain.

Straining her ears to listen, she waited till some loose stones, rumbling against the very rock that screened them, announced that the disputants were not far distant. It was with difficulty Murray could prevent her from poking out her head to see who were coming.

Presently two figures came tramping down, their voices ringing out with a sharp clearness on the still night air.

"It wad be worse for you than me, I reckon,"

one of them was saying. "The same rope that hangs me'll hang you, so ye'd better keep a ceevil tongue in yer head. I didna try to set the stuff on fire: it was an accident that micht hae happened wi' you as weel as me."

"You're an accursed fool," replied the other voice, which was that of Norman Lesly. "You have ruined us by your infernal carelessness. That blaze must have been seen: it lighted up the whole place. We can't store our goods here any longer, that's certain, and where to put them, I don't know; but out of there they must come, and quickly too. This will set the whole village talking again, curse you!"

The angry retort was only indistinctly heard, as the disputants passed on.

Then followed two other men, also talking.

"Ay, it's mair risky than I like," one of them was saying. "Hardy did weel to get clear o' sic dangerous wark. They say it was on account o' his dochter, though. We'd better keep oorsel's scarce for a day or twa; Lesly got a fricht he'll no forget in a hurry, an' he'll no gang near the Castle for a wee while."

"'Tak' my word for't he'll hae us here the morn's nicht, to get a' his gear shifted," returned the other. "He'll no let grass grow under his feet.—Did you hear him cursin' Fraser!"

"Fraser's a match for him; he'll-"

The voices died away; and, after waiting a little while longer to ensure safety, the two eavesdroppers crept out from their place of hiding, looking about them cautiously, in case of any other night prowlers from the ruins above.

No others appeared, however, and they began to exchange remarks on the snatches of conversation they had overheard.

"The fause-hearted rascal!" exclaimed Betsy. "To think that a' this time he's been daein' this deevil's wark, an' him in the Government customhoose! Did ye ever ken o' sic a thing? It cows a' I ever heard o'. Oh! but his 'oor has come! He ruined my braw young maister, but noo his ain wickedness has found him oot; an', eh sirs! it'll be an awfu' reck'nin'!"

"Weel, though I ne'er thocht muckle o' him, I didna think the man could be capable o' playin' sic a bold game as this. Na, if I hadna seen him an' h'ard him confess 't, I wadna hae believed it possible," commented David Murray.

"Onything was possible to ane wha led astray as gude an bonny a lad as e'er drew braith o' life," rejoined Betsy, unconsciously admitting that there were exceptions, and very marked ones, to her disbelief in men.

"Weel, what's to be dune noo?" questioned Murray.

"We maun tell the police, Dauvit," was the prompt reply.

"Odd, Betsy, wuman, I'm no vera heedin' aboot it," he rejoined, shrugging his massive shoulders.

"Nae wun'er; ye'll be thinkin' ye hae as muckle need o' them yersel'," said Betsy. "But I'm no sae blate, an' I'll gang in the morn's mornin' to Lynnburgh, an' gie them word o' this. Come awa, see; this is nae place for us. I trust to Providence we'll no fa' in wi' ony o' the blackguard crew," she added, as, clutching her companion's arm, she began to descend the precipitous path. "I've nae doot, they wad cut oor throats."

"If they kent a' we've seen an' h'ard, I'm no suir but they wad," he replied. "But will ye railly tell the police, Betsy?"

"Ay, will I. That deceitfu', hardened villain had nae peety for ane I wad hae dee'd to save, but drave him frae hame an' freen's, an' brocht shame an' misery on a' that lo'ed him sae weel: I'll hae nane for him, nane."

A fierce expression settled on her countenance,

and her old eye flashed with something like its youthful brilliance.

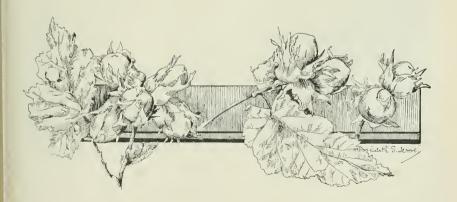
David Murray did not venture on any remonstrance, awed by her appearance at that moment; and in silence they made their way down to the beach.

"Eh, but I canna get ower this," remarked Betsy, as they strode across the sands. "To think that ill-starred vaigabond sude hae been a' this time cairryin' on sic wark, an' yet he had the face to misca' my ain gude maister! Weel, his day has come; though wha wad hae thocht I was to be the ane to bring him to a reckonin'—me that he esteemed nae mair than the dirt ablow his feet?"

This reflection overwhelmed the faithful woman to such a degree that she spoke not another word until they reached Cliff Cottage. Indeed she was on the point of forgetting a parting admonition to the ductile David, when, observing him glance longingly towards the village, she recollected herself, and said: "Noo ye'll gang stracht hame, mind: nae daunerin' aboot Rabbie Shiel's hoose-o'-ca' the nicht, Dauvit. Ye've dune me ae gude turn, but it'll mak' nae odds, if ye're no kind to Effie."

And waving her hand to emphasise the threat, she took leave of him, resolved not to say a word of that evening's adventure, until she had executed her purpose, when there would be some occasion for the rejoicing and congratulation she anticipated.

(To be continued.)





STORIES OF SOME FAMOUS PICTURES.

IV .- REYNOLDS, TURNER, AND LANDSEER.

By Kineton Parkes.

T is hardly an exaggeration to say that previous to the advent of Sir Joshua Reynolds, an English school of painting was non-existent. and it is, therefore, the more remarkable that it should have had so great a beginning. As foreign artists were so largely employed by the English court and nobility, it was only natural that their influence should be felt long after they themselves had retired from the practice of painting, and so it comes about that in the work of Sir Peter Lely and in that of Sir Godfrey Kneller, and of other smaller contemporaries, the influence of Holbein, Rubens, and Vandyck is to be traced more or less clearly. Of course, no better guides than those could be found, and in the work of their English successors many excellent qualities may be discovered, but these qualities are largely imitative. Hogarth was the first great original English artist; but Hogarth occupies a unique position, not only in our native art, but in the art of the world. He was original in a very original way, and he has no compeer either before or after. He did not follow tradition, and no tradition has followed him. We have had our caricaturists since his time, and our pictorial satirists, like Rowlandson, but none who can be compared with him. He is, therefore, somewhat of a "sport" in art, as the naturalists would say. and, therefore, not to be included in the sequence which may be traced in the early English masters, which resulted at last in a purely English painter-Joshua Reynolds.

Reynolds' genius was entirely original and spontaneous; it was native talent, and it may be said it continued so throughout his career. He never became a master of the brush like

Velasquez, nor a proficient in the nuances of light and shade like Rembrandt; he never painted a portrait in which simplicity becomes grandeur, as in Mr. Whistler's "Carlyle," and the portrait of his mother, neither did he attain to the science of pigments, as understood so perfectly by the great Italians before his time; but he produced a long series of beautiful and homely works of art, which exactly represent the thoughts and feelings of that interesting sentimental, egotistic age in which he lived, Simple and unsophisticated, Reynolds' circle included much of what was best of the art and thought of the time; his house was a court, and he was the gladly acknowledged sovereign, Born in the little township of Plympton, on the Plym, on July 15th, 1723, the son of the master of the grammar school there, he grew up through boyhood without knowledge of pictures, except those which nature provided, and nature is lavish in her favourite county of Devonshire. Nature is no teacher of painting, however, and as heredity does not come to our aid in this case, we are at a loss to account for the faculty of drawing, of which the youthful Joshua gave evidence at quite an early age. We even read of him in conjunction with his future patron, Lord Mount Edgecumbe, utilising old sailcloth as canvas. His talents being recognised thuswise, the aid of influential friends was sought, and when nineteen years of age he proceeded to London to learn the technicalities of his art from Thomas Hudson, in St. Martin's Lane.

He did not learn much, and he did not stay long with Hudson, who was as poor an artist as ever earned a considerable reputation, but returned to Devonshire and resumed his prac-



PORTRAIT OF Mrs. BRADDYLE.

By Sir Joshua Reynolds.

tice of portraiture for some years, and then proceeded to Rome for study. Here he copied from the Italian masters and did some original work, returning to London in 1753 thoroughly imbued with admiration for such masters as Correggio and Titian. He now had an enormous practice. gauged by the conditions existing at the present time. He had a hundred and twenty-five sitters in one year, doing a portrait for as little as £,20! Thenceforward his life was an easy, if busy, one. It had never been difficult, but now he was surrounded by admiring, and often powerful, friends, and we find him removing from one studio to another for want of room, until at last he settled in the well-known house in Leicester Square, on which a tablet now records who once was its illustrious inmate. In 1769 Reynolds was knighted, and in 1773-a pleasure which he seems to have appreciated very keenly-was his election to the Mayoralty of his native town, Plympton. Ten years before he died he was seized with a paralytic stroke, but he recovered from it and went on painting until 1789, when partial blindness prevented him from doing more.

Sir Joshua is often spoken of as the founder of the Royal Academy, but the expression is misleading. Many attempts had been made to found it, but without success. When at last, in 1768, it came to be, he was made its first President, but he was not responsible for its initiation. Whatever uses the Academy may now have, and whatever abuses, there is no gainsaying the fact that without it English Art as it is, with its worthy roll of names, would not have been. It sheltered some of our finest geniuses when they were rising to the fame which was not as yet, and its schools provided the elementary instruction, without which they could not have reached the excellence they attained to. Sir Joshua's connection with the Academy was an interesting and an honourable one; but it was to a wider, though unofficial, Academy that still more interest attaches, and of which he was the unacknowledged President -that Academy which included Dr. Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith, Boswell, Garrick, Burke, and others of almost equal eminence. These centred round the great painter, and although he saw the death of some of them, there was still a minority left to mourn for him when he died on February 23rd, 1792, and was buried in the Cathedral of St. Paul's, near to the tomb of Sir Christopher Wren.

Joseph Mallord William Turner was the son of a hairdresser, and was born in Maiden Lane on the 23rd April, 1775. He exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1790, having been admitted to its schools in the previous year. He owed little to academic teaching, and, like many of the most original painters, was self-taught. In his early years architecture engaged most of his attention, and he travelled much of England making topographical drawings of the places and buildings he chanced across in his wanderings. He also travelled the continent in search of material, and nothing seems to have escaped his observation. He used all kinds of media. and was astonishingly careless of the way he produced his pictures, as well as of the pictures when they were made. The shocking condition in which many of his works were found at his death was deplorable. He was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy in 1799, and three years after a full member. The work by which he is so universally known, the Liber Studiorum, was commenced in 1807. The great picture, the "Bay of Baiæ," was exhibited in 1823, and the "Fighting Teméraire" in 1839. Turner's death took place in a small house in Chelsea on the 19th December, 1851, where he had retired presumably to enjoy the views of the river he loved so well. He died as he had chiefly lived, almost alone, and would have been quite alone except that an accident afforded his friends the means of tracing him to his retreat.

In Turner we have, perhaps, the chiefest glory of English art: great as was the art of Sir Joshua, it was of the old convention, but Turner's work was a new revelation. Never before had pigments been used as he used them; and never since. The essence of his great art seems to have been the expression of effect, and in all his greater pictures some effect of sunlight is the motive of the work. The reason for the existence of his pictures is to be found here. He did not so much study nature or architecture, as the way in which nature and architecture looked under certain atmospheric



VENICE.
By TURNER.

conditions; and these appearances he reproduced as if by magic. He discovered the infinitude of colour and opened new fields to the painter, conquering them as he went. Most of his pictures are quite unlike those of any other master: they are impressions reproduced from the note-books or the mental notes of the painter, and mostly of impressions which pass unseen and unnoticed by the eye of the ordinary person, and, indeed, up to Turner's time, of the eye of the artist also. It has been urged that some of them are impossible and have never been seen in nature; if this is so, then so much the worse for nature, I do not think it is so, however, for nature is often at her loveliest when the unseeing eye is looking blindly at the pictures she unavailingly supplies.

Turner's greatest glory consists in his use, and the revelations he made of water-colours. He was really the first, and is the greatest, water-colour painter. In the history of art, the English School is alone in the greatness of its water-colour art, and it was Turner who was the pioneer of this exquisite form. He not only enlarged the bounds of the art of painting in oils, but he demonstrated how infinitely more plastic is water-colour and how much more expressive than any other medium. Many of his works in water-colour exhibit the whole range of colour and the gradations of shade, and the effects thus produced are marvellous.

Edwin Henry Landscer was born in 1802, in London, and, having studied art at a school in Hampstead, at the age of thirteen he was exhibiting at the Royal Academy, and working in Haydon's studio. His famous picture, "Fighting Dogs," was painted when he was only sixteen, and so great was its success that his career was undoubtedly settled for him by its exhibition. His works for the next few years were chiefly shown at the British Institution, which body awarded him a premium of $f_{.150}$ in the year 1822. His first visit to the Highlands, which resulted in the many pictures of stags, with engravings of which everyone is now so familiar, was made in 1824. His social success was undoubted and very rapid, and he underwent none of the painful struggles which have beset the path of many a great painter. He was only twenty-four when he was made an Associate of the Royal Academy, and at twenty-eight he was a full Academician. In 1850 he was knighted. The celebrated Landseer Lions of Trafalgar Square were commissioned in 1850, and these occupied him more or less constantly for seven years. His celebrated picture, "Flood in the Highlands," was exhibited at the Academy in 1860. He was invited to become President of the Academy, but declined the honour. He died on October 1st, 1873, and was buried in St. Paul's.

Landscer occupies a peculiar position in the history of art; as a painter of domestic animals he has no equal; but inasmuch as he was nothing more than an animal painter, he can never be ranked among the greatest of his craft. To do a thing as well as it can be done is a noble work accomplished, and this Landseer did; but he was content to excel in a humbler walk of art than that which Reynolds or Turner trod. There is much that is very beautiful, however, in the side of art which Landseer chose, and there is a certain fitness in the fact that the greatest painter of animals should be an Englishman. Who but an Englishman can thoroughly love the horse and the dog, and even humbler animals? and the Englishman is acknowledged to be the keenest and the humanest of all sportsmen. Landseer himself, with all his love for the animal creation, was an ardent sportsman, and followed the chase and immortalised its trophies. It is natural, then, that Landseer's peculiar side of art should appeal mostly to his own countrymen, and more to the sportsman and the lover of animals-the terms are synonymous-than to the lover of art. Artists and critics appreciate its great qualities, but they are less enthusiastic over them than the other class of admirers I have named. Attempts have been made to depreciate Landseer's merits, but the open mind cannot but admit that he was a great painter in spite of his limitations.

Both in Landseer and in Turner we have men essentially the greatest in the branches of art they practised. Of the former I have just spoken; of the latter it is no exaggeration to say that he excels all previous landscapists, not excluding the great Claude, whose work he emulated and finally surpassed. Until Turner



KING CHARLES SPANIELS,
By Landseer,



THE MAID AND THE MAGPIE.

By Landseer.

revealed the secret, the world had not discovered that landscape was a matter of atmosphere, and that the atmosphere could reveal a series of colours which only Turner's palette could emulate and only Turner's genius could see. Since his work was accomplished his discovery has been made much of, and not only landscape art in its purity, but all art which is not exclusively of the studio, has been revolutionised. Turner it was who made the discovery, but it

was the Thames helped him to it, and the Englishman is justly proud, therefore, in that one of the most beautiful rivers in the world should have been the means of at least producing the most beautiful pictures. In the portraits of Reynolds we have not the supreme art of portraiture. It is great in its degree and great in its kind, but it is less noble than the similar work of the continental masters.

HOW A GIRL LIVED IN ANCIENT ATHENS.

By S. E. HALL.

WE are all somewhat apt to draw a circle round our personal lives, and call it the horizon of the universe. If the English girl of the present day, with her high school education, her progressive instincts, and her gospel of revolt, were to lift her eyes and look on the life of a younger sister of hers in a far-distant age and country—a country that was to her own day the central sun of civilisation, and an age endowed with a clear vision of beauty, not since attained by men—she would, perhaps, find some side-lights thrown on the study of her own life-problem.

To look for an Athenian girl, we must go neither to school-rooms, places of assembly, nor highways. Her father's house was her world; her life was essentially domestic, and in great part religious; but there was in it-what must have saved it from insipidity-a flavour of the national spirit: she never lost (as it is possible her modern counterpart may do) the sense of sharing in the life of her country. The great national festivals could not be duly held without her; from earliest infancy it was the ambition of the well-born Athenian maiden to be appointed to certain functions pertaining to the national religion. Perhaps the first event of importance in her life would be the share she took in the sacred rite of "Dew-bearing," in view of which she must be set apart for some months to dwell in the temple, and perform certain sacred duties. High, indeed, was the honour laid on the little child of seven, who, dedicated for a space to the service of the great and gracious goddess, the guardian of her city, was led, full of pride and awe, up the steep side of the acropolis, to remain, till her office was fulfilled, in the holy precincts, and under the immediate protection of Athene. Then with tiny fingers she commenced the weaving of the mystic garment, afterwards to be completed and marvellously inwrought by the cunning hands of the matrons of Athens, and presented in holy pomp to the goddess at the great Panathenæa; or else as "Dew-bearer" she carried on her head in solemn procession, to the shrine of the goddess in a sacred grotto below, the casket containing the hidden things of the sanctuary; supporting in her small person the burden of the city's worship.

Proud, too, was the distinction that awaited the high-born maiden perhaps a year or two later, when she was appointed "meal-grinder" (most menial of offices on other occasions) to the goddess, and chosen to prepare the cakes for sacrifice. Then there was the mystic bear-dance to Artemis, to be performed by the child when ten years old at latest, and which threw across her path the first shadow of her future wifehood—but of this more anon.

One can fancy that the little heads may sometimes have borne ill the change from the glory and importance of these public offices to the secluded and humble routine of existence in the father's house; and that disturbing dreams of the life outside may have visited the girl on her return to the close guardianship of her mother and of the old family nurse: the ceaseless monotony of the loom and the distaff; and the same familiar chambers, whose walls were her world's horizon. She was, however, spared the discipline of "lessons"indeed, she had nothing that could be called regular instruction, though some Athenian women seem to have been able to read and write; and that girls in Athens had merry games at times is evident from the learned notes of that ancient lecturer. Pollux, who tells us, in his formal way, of what must have been a pretty sport to watch, a game called "Tortoise" (only that the Greek name, with its charming iteration, has an effect which cannot be produced in English), in which one little girl called "Tortoise" sat in the centre, and the others ran round her crying, "Tortoise, what dost thou there in the middle?" And she answered, "I weave a web of costliest wool." And the others said again, "Tell us, how did thy little boy die?" And she replied, "With a team of white horses he leaped in the sea." Then there was the game of "Hist!" which apparently included a trial of speed, the girls endeavouring to outrun each other, perhaps in imitation of woodnymphs, on whose names they called as they ran. "Hist, apple-nymphs! Hist, ash-nymphs!" and so on. One hears, too, of games with dice, and games at ball.

In order to realise the daily life of a girl in ancient Athens, one must bear in mind the total absence of certain things which, in our minds, are more or less associated with the idea of girlhood. For her there were no fashions; no social intercourse; no love-making. When I say no fashions. however, let it not be supposed that the Athenian maiden had no care for her personal appearance. and no pleasure in outdoing her companions in the costliness and beauty of her attire. But the fact that the fashion of dress did not change, or scarcely changed, in the lifetime of one individual. must have saved her from troubles that she never dreamed of in the necessity of keeping "up to date," while the terrible word "old-fashioned" never smote with its ominous sound on her ears.

The chiton, with its simple graceful folds, was her inheritance from unnamed ancestors, and varied only in details according to the taste, wealth, or occupation of the wearer. It was not cut out to suit the individual—the arts of the tailor and the dressmaker were unknown—but it was

woven to measure—a loose, oblong, linen garment, sometimes as broad as the two outstretched arms, girt up around the waist so as to reach just to the feet, and fastened with a clasp on the shoulder, over the girdle. It hung in large folds, the beauty of a tight waist not having yet dawned on the mind of the Athenian lady. It was open on one side, either the whole way down or from the shoulder to the hips, and on the closed side had merely an arm-hole. The free play thus allowed to the arms must have added to the graceful effect of the whole. How much we modern Philistines miss by murdering the flowing lines of the arm and shoulder!

In details there was scope for individual caprice, which was by no means wanting. Thus we hear of "trailing chitons" (the uses of which in dusty Athens may be surely taken to show how little the women went out of doors), and "standing chitons," which, dispensing with the girdle, stood in straight pleats from neck to heel; and "battlemented chitons," with edges cut in squares like battlements; and chitons with parti-coloured borders, the rest of the garment being generally white. A young girl frequently wore nothing outside her chiton; underneath it there was probably a small petticoat or under-garment.

The long loose cloak worn by grown women, and also by men, outside the chiton is well-known in works of art. It was drawn across the back from the left arm, which held it fast, and then either passed under the right arm or across the right shoulder and the chest, the end being thrown over the left shoulder. It was specially in the choice of this upper garment that a taste for gay colour could show itself. The saffron cloak, apparently of a somewhat different shape from the ordinary one, was much affected by "smart" people; and though the Greek lady had no love for strong colours, yet gay patterns, stripes, and embroidery were dear to her soul.

Moreover, the variety and gorgeousness of her head-gear were astonishing. It must be remembered that (unless when a long time in the open air, as at the theatre or on a journey) an Athenian woman went bare-headed; though on a hot day she would carry a sunshade, or have one held over her by a servant; and she would sometimes draw the top of her cloak over her head. But her coiffure must often have made her feel that further

covering for the head was unnecessary. For the simple coil of down-drawn hair, which one generally thinks of as "Greek," was frequently seen; any one pretending to distinction in dress (at any rate, in the latter part of the fifth century B.C.) must have her net of gold thread or silk, and her "mitre"—a kerchief wound round the head in various ways to bind up the hair; and a grand lady would wear on her brow her "diadem," a frontlet of metal, pointed in the centre, and often richly ornamented, while the variety of pins, bands, and other fastenings for the hair displayed the most fanciful ingenuity.

Gold ear-rings, bracelets and ornaments of all sorts were worn in the greatest profusion by girls and women. "The villain has come to the woman's feast to steal their gold!" cries one of Aristophanes' indignant matrons, on discovering the intrusion of a man at the women's festival to Demeter; and in the sacred processions, it concerned the credit of a family that their matrons and maidens should be decked out with costliest adornment of gold and precious stones. Of emerald and sapphire we hear, of pearl ear-drops, and glowing carbuncle for rings; nor is the record wanting of washes for the hair, used to produce the coveted golden colour, and of cosmetics for the complexion, some for fairness, and some for brilliancy. Indeed we have an interesting picture of the vanity of Athenian ladies in the lines of an obscure Greek poet, who, giving quaint "precepts for marriage" to a maiden, warns her: "Have not excessive desire for gold, nor wear dark gleaming amethyst on thy neck, nor pale jasper, such as light-minded women are puffed up withal; but do not thou, O maiden, long for false adornment, nor, holding up the mirror, gaze at thine image therein; nor plait thy hair in exceeding many braids; nor blacken thine eyes beneath thine eyelids. For woman's body does not give her a half-finished form in order that she should devise other things to add thereto. And how, maiden, wilt thou appear in the eyes of a sensible man, if thou vary thy mortal body with equipment that changes from day to day. behold thee a different being at different times, one woman appearing in many forms."

As for the social aspects of life, they were almost non-existent for the well-born Athenian maiden. Social life develops individual life, and hers was everything rather than individual. She lived for

her gods, her country, and her home. Intercourse with men, other than male relatives, was forbidden even for a married woman. It was held unseemly for a man, not belonging to the family, to come into the women's apartments, or, indeed, to enter the house at all in the absence of the master. Very little must maid or matron be seen in the streets. When, in a tragic moment, on news of a defeat arriving at Athens, wives and daughters stood watching in the doorways with straining eves and ears for tidings of life or death, the orator speaks of their being thus seen in public as a thing "unworthy of themselves and of the city." Not till old age was upon her was she allowed more freedom. "She who walks abroad," says Hyperides, "should be of such an age that those who meet her should ask, not whose wife, but whose mother she is."

The few special occasions on which an exception was made to this rule must have given life its chief savour. When festivals were held to the gods, or when tragedies were performed at the theatre (these, also, of course, being religious festivals) the Athenian woman came forth from her home and joined the throng. Red-letter days indeed must those of the great Dionysia have been in her secluded life; when, in the bright spring weather, she joined with the whole population of her city to see and hear, for three consecutive days, in the theatre of the god Dionysus, plays by the first poets of the time, performed in his honour. To a girl, certain of the women's festivals, held to the awful goddesses below, were hidden mysteries, to which she could be admitted through the gate of marriage only; but she had a distinguished part to play in various sacred processions, especially in the great festival of her city's goddess, Athene, when such maidens as were "fair" were chosen to bear on their heads baskets containing the sacred things for the sacrifice, the "basket-bearer" making so graceful a picture that the beauty-loving eye of the Greek has seized on it for representation in many an exquisite work of art.

Indeed, it was in the worship of the gods that the emotional and enthusiastic side of the Greek girl's nature must have found its vent. As she awoke to the homely routine of the day, the cooking, the spinning, and the carding of wool, and lifted her eyes to her own brilliant sky, shining above the open roof of her father's hall, she could

see gleaming in the rising sun that matchless temple on the summit of the acropolis, whose beauty was consecrated in her eyes; and beside it the awful figure of the goddess herself, of superhuman size, keeping perpetual guard over the city, with bronze spear and helmet that burned like fire from afar. Her own beloved Athens, with its pillared temples, its priceless marbles, and its gems of art, was like a treasure-house of beauty dedicated to the divine powers. She could scarcely turn in any direction, or perform an act of any special significance, without recognising the presence, or calling on the protection, of the gods. Ever before her eyes was the holy altar of Hestia, the family hearth, on which she must place offerings and wreaths of flowers, and pour holy libations; as she crossed the threshold of her home she must pass before the altar of Hermes, or perhaps of Apollo, god of the highways. and for it, too, she must prepare due oblations and gifts of honour. Above all there was her own goddess, Artemis, the guardian of her youth and purity, to whom special worship was due from her throughout her brief girlhood-brief, indeed, for marriage crossed the Greek girl's horizon before youth was well begun, and she must sometimes take on her the burden of wifehood at fifteen years, or even less; and to Artemis, before this solemn crisis in her life drew near, she must perform a strange and mystic rite. Clad in a saffron robe. she must join the throng of "bear-dancers," young girls who, at a special festival of Artemis, did service to the goddess with a kind of dance or gesture-worship, in which they mimicked the action of bears; and she was told of a legend, which set forth how Artemis had been angered by the accidental destruction of a tame bear belonging to her, and, in consequence, exacted this strange service from every maiden before her marriage. Artemis, too, when the day of her marriage approached, she must dedicate a lock of her hair and her maiden girdle, a symbol of the time now ended, when the pure maiden had been under the special protection of the virgin goddess.

• Of love, as an element in marriage, the Greek maiden knew nothing; the choice of a husband was no concern of hers, and custom would have precluded her making his acquaintance before the wedding-day. She was won, but not wooed. The strange, subtle growth of passion, attaining both consummation and sanction in a union blessed by

family and state, did not enter into her experience. She was the instrument of an arrangement, which on one side was a mere family bargain, but on another side was of national importance. For on the insignificant thread of a girl's destiny depended the purity of the race. No marriage, except with an Athenian citizen, was considered valid. When the substantial part of the business, the dowry and the agreements, had been settled by the higher powers, came the preliminary sacrifice to the tutelar gods of marriage, the lock of hair dedicated to Artemis, and the offerings to Hera and the Fates. This sacrifice was performed by the father. and might be a few days before the marriage. When the great day arrived, the young bride had various mystic rites to go through, among the most important and solemn of which was the ceremonial bathing in water brought from the spring Callirhoe. Both bride and bridegroom must bathe in this sacred water, which was fetched for the purpose by a relative of youthful age. Of such profound significance was this rite, that over the tombs of those who died unmarried was frequently represented the figure of a girl carrying waterperhaps to show that the rite having been omitted on earth, would have to be performed in Hades.

At nightfall the bride, often scarcely more than a frightened child, must leave, for the first time and for ever, her father's house, and, seated in a chariot drawn by mules or oxen, on a sort of couch placed therein for the purpose, on one side of her the unknown companion of all her future life, and on the other one of his intimate friends, arrayed in festal attire, with a long veil, and a crown on her head; her bridegroom also crowned and adorned, she was conveyed to her new home. Joyful wasthe throng of relatives and friends, that accompanied this car of triumph on its progress through the streets, with singing of the Hymen song, sound of flutes, and blaze of torches; the bride's own mother carrying one that had been duly kindled at the family hearth. Arrived at the bridegroom's house (where the wedding-feast usually took place) the bridal pair were received with showers of sweetmeats, and under hanging garlands, and entertained at a banquet with their friends-whose presence, indeed (no civic rite being performed), served instead of documentary evidence of the marriage. In this banquet the bride's mother, sisters, and female relatives took part, admitted for

once to a gathering of men, though they must sit at different tables. The feast over, the bride, still veiled, was conducted to the bridal chamber, where she and her bridegroom must eat together the symbolic quince, ordained to be so partaken by a law of Solon, and said to represent the sweetness of their conversation. Then would fall on her ear the voices of her girl-friends chanting the marriage song, the epithalamium, outside the chamber-door; those friends with whom she had shared the pleasures of her short child-life, but from whom she was now separated by a mystic barrier, which she could never cross again.

Not for two days yet might the bride appear unveiled, and during this time the wedding gifts were received, among which was the ceremonial presentation of a special kind of cloak by the bride to the bridegroom; and the marriage ceremonies were completed when, shortly afterwards, with another

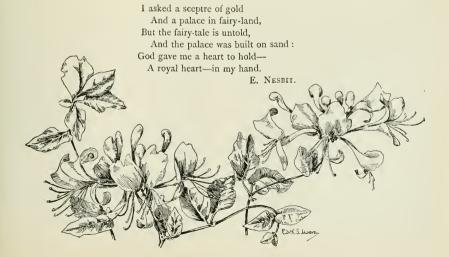
sacrifice and banquet, the husband enrolled his wife in his own clan, and registered his marriage. Except for the presence of one trusted servant, who generally accompanied the young bride to her new home, the former ties were almost entirely loosed, and she belonged as completely and solely to her husband's family, as she had formerly belonged to her father's.

So dwarfed on the side of individual development was the life of the Athenian woman; yet was the ideal not wanting in it. She belonged to her family and her country rather than to herself; she could feel the heart-beats of her nation, as if they were her own; she was encompassed on every hand by the unseen powers of the world, with whom she dwelt in immediate and intimate communion; and with this price she paid for freedom from the cramping effect of a too anxious self-realisation.

THE WOMAN'S KINGDOM.

August as the Heavens are high,
All set with jewels that shone,
For all men to know me by;
But I sit by a warm hearth-stone,
Yet none sits higher that I.

I bent my brow for a crown,
To lie on my woman's hair,
Set with a gem of renown,
Most fit for a queen to wear:
And my forehead is still bowed down,
And only a kiss shines there.





THE STORY OF A HIGHLAND STRATHSPEY.

By Jessie Macleod.

"WHAT bars our progress?" asked the King, as the cavalcade, composed of courtiers, councillors, and soldiers, came to a sudden halt at the entrance to a defile between steep mountains. "Ride forward to the vanguard, and ascertain the cause, Dunbar."

The nobleman whom he addressed bowed low, spurred his horse, and departed, returning quickly.

"Sire," answered he, "it is because we lack a guide."

"We have had one hitherto."

"Yes, sire, but he knows the country no further, it grows wilder and wilder; besides, there is a morass he fears to pass; the Captain of the vanguard has ridden up to yon stone dwelling hoping to obtain one there."

As he spoke he indicated a square tower, built on the gentle acclivity which lay at the base of a precipitous mountain; the departing sunbeams falling upon it showed a spot of much natural beauty. It was surrounded by a group of birches and mountain ash, and was situated on the bank of a torrent which poured forth its liquid treasure down to the more level country.

The monarch's gaze followed to the direction the page indicated, and beheld the Captain with three men-at-arms before the door of the dwelling. Suddenly their swords flashed from the scabbards; there was evidently a quarrel, and the shrill cries of a woman mingled with the deeper tones of the men, came wafted on the air; then the Captain and his soldiers returned rapidly down the descent, driving three Highlanders before them. The King summoned the Captain to his presence, and inquired the cause of the fray.

"They are three wild Highlanders, my liege, who refuse to guide us to Mingarry; but do it they shall."

"Take care, Moncrieff: they might play us false. Bring them hither."

The three Highlanders were dragged before the King: a father with his two sons, all fine erect men, with an expression of anger and indignation stamped on their countenances at the unceremonious treatment to which they had been subjected.

"Why do you refuse to guide us?" demanded the King.

"I only obey my chief," said the father, standing with folded arms, and a look of determination on his face.

"And who is he?"

"John of the Isles," replied the Highlander, briefly.

"Guide us swiftly and surely to Mingarry Castle before the sun is gone" (for already the purple shadows were lengthening eastward), "and this gold piece shall be yours."

"No gold will tempt me to guide the enemies of my chief," said the man, proudly and scornfully.

"Now by my halidom this is too much!" cried the King, in sudden wrath. "Bind their arms with cords, and drive the disloyal caitiffs before you—they must, and shall, guide us to Mingarry by sunset!"

There was no resisting the royal mandate. The father and sons were rapidly bound, and driven before the advance at the point of the soldiers' spears.

"Should you deceive us, by leading us into a morass or any other danger unknown to us, you

know your fate," said the Captain, grimly, riding immediately beside these unwilling guides with his sword drawn

"Stranger," replied the Highlander, stopping abruptly, "you little know Ingarach nan Chaistel: I fight my enemies, I do not betray them," and, with a frown on his brow, he turned his face towards the defile and commenced his undertaking; but the sun had set and the moon had arisen before the stronghold of MacIan, Mingarry Castle, was reached after a laborious journey. Ingarach and his sons, however, were not allowed to depart: on the plea that they belonged to a hostile clan, they were thrust into a narrow dungeon, with a hard loaf and a pitcher of water, there to await their doom for disloyalty.

For a considerable time the condition of the Highlanders had occupied the attention of James IV., and it was for the reduction of these wild and remote districts to the same form of government as the rest of his kingdom, that this journey was undertaken; as it was of the first importance to attach the principal chieftains to his interest. The Macgilleons of Duart and Lochbuy, Mackone of Ardnamurchan, and others, had already declared their allegiance. On this occasion, A.D. 1493, James, accompanied by the officers of his household, his lords and councillors. with a strong body-guard of cross-bowmen and soldiers, had ridden from Perth across the "Mounth," the term applied to the extensive chain of mountains which extends from the border of the Mearns to the head of Loch Rannoch. This journey was conducted with great state, and as he halted at the castles of his nobles on the way, his passion for hunting and sailing was gratified. The rapidity with which he passed from one place to another, the manner in which he punished those opposed to him, his generosity to his friends, his gay manner, added to the wealth, grandeur, and military power at his command, had a salutary effect; most of the chieftains readily submitting to a prince who could carry hostilities into the heart of their country, even to their island fastnesses,

One chieftain, and he a powerful one, John of the Isles, still held aloof, and it was to him that Ingarach owed allegiance.

Day after day passed. Elspat, his wife, and Alan, his youngest son, watched for the familiar figures of the absent ones in vain; neither did

messenger arrive with tidings, and the poor woman's heart sank within her. On the fourth morning of their absence she called her son, saving: "Speed ve, Alan of the deer's feet, across the mountain, and know wherefore thy father and brethren tarry at Mingarry. Take thy chanter; few men can withstand thy music. My spirit will know no rest until thy return." Alan, the fairhaired, was but a youth; delicacy of constitution had denied him the harder life of his brothers; he was no hunter on the hills, nor did he join in the sports and frequent skirmishes of the time, but he had one divine gift: he was a born musician, producing such excellent music on his pipes as to bring tears to the eyes or gladness to the heart. He would wander in solitude from dawn to evening, imitating the songs of the birds, or the rush of the wind, as it wailed before a coming storm. The fame of his genius had become known even in these wilds, and Alan was sought out for both weddings and funerals.

For a youth of his delicate organisation, the pilgrimage to Mingarry was most fatiguing; he arrived there at sunset, and sank down exhausted on a stone beside the drawbridge. The castle of the MacIan was situated on the southern shore of Ardnamurchan, five or six miles from the point: its shape irregular-broadest on the land side, where it was protected by a fosse, and narrowest towards the sea, which it overhung; it had an open courtyard in the centre. The drawbridge was down, and sentinels passed to and fro, taking no great heed of the youth, who, they imagined, was waiting to see the King and his nobles return from the chase. Presently, the bugles sounded, and the cavalcade drew near at walking pace, wearied with the day's sport; the hounds held in leash. In order to see better, as well as to evade them, Alan mounted the stone on which he had hitherto sat, thus unconsciously becoming a prominent object to the advancing party, and arresting the attention of the King, who rode at the head of the troop.

"Is yon piper placed on a pedestal to welcome our return?" asked he of MacIan, who was beside him, indicating the lad, who doffed his bonnet. The declining sunbeams fell upon his golden hair and face of almost feminine beauty; the king looked at him admiringly, and reined up his horse. "Well," said he, not unkindly, "now for thy music—play thy best tune." Alan, although timid at being thus addressed, instantly complied, giving out his most admired piece, "The Birds," which imitated the song of the lark, the thrill of the thrush, the plaintive pewet, the shrill cry of the eagle, and the coo of the wood pigeon; in fact, those birds he had the opportunity of hearing.

The monarch was surprised and delighted.

"And what is thy name, my pretty boy?" asked he.

"Alan, son of Ingarach nan Chaistel." At this name many a brow darkened. There was an ominous silence.

"He is the youngest son and brother of the men who are to lose their heads for disloyalty at to-morrow's dawn," said a follower of MacIan, who knew Alan by reputation.

Though the words were spoken in a subdued tone, Alan's quick ear caught them; he gave a loud wail, sprang to the ground, cast his pipes from him, and, burying his face in his hands, gave himself up to the deepest despair.

"We must have another tune," said the King: "be he friend or faitour, his playing is matchless. Come, my lad, rouse up; it's the King who speaks."

One of the retinue shook the youth roughly by the arm, a second tore his hands from his eyes, while a third picked up the pipes and forced them upon him. Alan looked up, his eyes dazed with horror.

"Oh, King! mercy, mercy!" cried he, rushing forward and falling on his knees. "They must have guided you safely or you would not be here. Spare, oh spare my father and brothers!"

"We will answer you when you have given forth another tune—a strathspey," said James,

Alan rose from his kneeling attitude, trembling in every fibre with agitation, and tried to obey the command; but every sound he produced sounded like a wail. He was quite incapable of playing; for the moment he had lost his powers.

"I cannot play, O King, to-day; for tears are in my music."

Some of the courtiers laughed, the monarch waved his hand towards them for silence.

"Try again," he said.

And Alan essayed once more, with the same result; only discordant sounds came. He dashed the pipes to the ground in despair. King James looked at the youth attentively; perhaps he pitied his anguish.

"Your father's and brothers' lives shall be spared only on one condition," said he; "for they are rebellious to their lawful sovereign. Come this day sennight and play a joyous strathspey that will make dance all who hear it—of thine own composing. If you fail, there is the penalty to rebels," and he pointed upwards to a head on the walls, where, on spikes, were placed hideous relics of mortality. Alan's eyes followed the uplifted arm, and he shuddered.

The King rode on, the retinue followed, leaving the poor youth plunged in despair. He re-seated himself on the stone and sobbed aloud. But a kind-hearted serving man pitied his grief and weariness, and sheltered him for the night.

It was sad tidings he carried to his mother on the following day. Of all the ingenious devices this was the most difficult task the King could have given him. With his sensitive, poetic nature he could only produce music in harmony with his feelings. Heart-broken, how could he breathe music that should make the spirit glad and joyful?

He renewed his solitary walks, and every imaginable strain issued from his pipes save a joyful: no inspiration came; and, after hours of absence, he would return to meet his mother's wistful eyes and eager questioning, which he was still obliged to answer negatively; and poor Elspat's face grew more and more wan as day after day of the allotted time passed away with no result. Who can describe poor Alan's agony of mind? His very anxiety and nervousness defeated his success—that success upon which depended three lives, and those his father's and brothers'. On the sixth morning, at early dawn, Alan seized his pipes and sallied forth from a sleepless pillow to wander amidst the lovely scenes of Nature.

The sky was rose-tinted, the distant hills like amethyst, with glimpses of an emerald sea; all was beauty around him; the dew glistened among the heath-bells and blue mountain flowers; high up in the air the lark sang melodiously, in concert with the curlew and plover; a scene like this had hither-to befriended his poet soul, which now drank no delight from the bright morning, but sorrow. Oh! the morrow, the morrow, and the blood that was to be shed! Some time he wandered on the mountain side, then in the valley: the music which had arisen

unbidden for frivolous merry-making had deserted him in this dread hour of need. All day the poor youth wandered, not heeding in what direction, when he found himself in a little glen he had never visited before. There was much foliage, groups of graceful bush, and alders, and here and there masses of grey rock, overgrown with mosses and lichen. The turf was like velvet; it was a spot where probably the foot of man had seldom, perhaps never, trod before. Alan placed his pipes on the ground, seated himself upon a boulder, and gave himself up to sorrow—all was lost.

As he sat thus in silence, a musical sound at some little distance attracted his attention. It was low, sweet, and mellow—the drip, drip, dripping of water on a stony bed. Why, it played a tune! The key a minor one; there were triplets, allegretto, allegro, vivace, prestissimo—then suddenly dropping to moderato, when it recommenced the allegretto, to a passage of rapid notes as before: the very repetition was delightful: it was the liveliest tune Nature or man ever played. Alan listened entranced; his eye brightened, he seized his pipes, carefully and tenderly imitating the delicious melody, which astonished himself when produced on his instrument.

The Highland music is remarkable for its simplicity, wildness, pathos, and expression. The scale used is different to the ordinary diatonic, and is defective, wanting the fourth and seventh, giving rise to the plaintiveness of Highland melody, imparting to its music a character peculiarly adapted to the nature of their poetry. Over and over again did Alan rehearse the air, until he had it perfect. He then sought the little singing burn, which he found falling from a considerable height upon a rocky bed, quite worn in a hollow by the unceasing dripping of the water that had not ceased for ages. Heaven had mercifully aided him, and, with a thankful heart, Alan turned his face homeward, playing as he walked, the wildest, merriest strathspey that was ever heard.

The nearer way to reach the tower from the dell to which Providence had directed his footsteps was through the open valley, where many habitations nestled beside a flowing river. Alan had to pass the old water-mill. The miller's wife, hearing the unusual strains of gay music, issued from her door, but no sooner did she hear the strathspey, than, elderly though she was, she began

to dance. The miller was in the mill, and with the din of the wheel did not hear the music, but catching sight of his wife, believed she had taken leave of her senses, and hurried to her; and then he also was bewitched by the pipes, "Well done, Alan!" cried he, "well done, old wife!" and began to foot it. Then Alan knew that his music was all powerful; he played until the pair had no breath left them, then he resumed his walk. On the banks of the stream further down were some maidens washing linen, and he stopped to try the experiment upon them, with the same result: with one accord they abandoned their employment, and began to dance merrily. When he played his strathspey to poor Elspat, she, who had cried with grief, now fairly sobbed with joy at his success. Before daybreak the following morning, Alan and his mother were on their way to Mingarry, where they arrived in due time. The courtyard of the castle was occupied by the MacIan's followers, and the king's guards in unwonted numbers. On the castle wall a rude scaffold had been erected, where the headsman was to perform his horrible task. At this sight poor Elspat sank down on the step of a small arched doorway, and casting her plaid over her face, uttered a loud wail. But Alan advanced bravely, his pipes on his arm, towards the captain of the guard, who laughed derisively when the youth humbly informed him he had come to keep the king's tryst. "You silly gomeril!" said he. "did you deem the king in earnest! He cares not for your music,-he was but in jest." And the captain, who was a hard man, turned away. A young page stood nigh, and whispered to Alan kindly: "Nevertheless, he shall know thou art here, he will issue forth anon," and the friendly page hurried to the castle entrance. Presently there was a great stir, and the horses were brought forth, for the king was going to the chase. James now appeared, looking fresh and handsome, attired for the sport. The page walked at his stirrup. On passing near where poor Alan stood trembling with fear and anxiety, the monarch reined up his beautiful horse, and motioned the lad to approach him.

"Well, young friend," said he, graciously, "we have not forgotten our promise. Have you brought us cheering music, that will make our hearts gay?"

Then Alan took courage at the kindly beam in

the king's eyes, and after a preliminary flourish of introduction—burst out in his strathspey—joyous, cheerful—fast, faster, still faster—the king laughed more heartily than he had ever done in his life—the soldiers could not keep still, they shouted a loud cheer of admiration. Then followed a perfect din of applause from the Highlanders and from the suite.

"This is a strathspey indeed!" cried the King, enthusiastically. "Never before have we heard such joyous music. Bring forth the prisoners!"

Starved and wan, with matted hair and ragged beards, blinking like owls at being brought from their sombre dungeon into the bright sunlight of noonday, with hope dead in their hearts, were Ingarach nan Chaistel and his two sons led forth, deeming it was for their execution. Tears coursed down poor Elspat's lined face as she saw her husband and sons led forth. They looked as she had never seen them look before, very different to the three fine gallant men who had departed from the mountain side twelve days before.

"Strike off their fetters," said James.

Ingarach staggered forward, and fell on his knees.

"Pardon, pardon, my liege!" cried he.

"Thou art free," replied James, "but never again defy the king." Then to Alan he said, "Come nearer, boy, and receive our guerdon, for by my halidom thou playest well!" and he gave the blushing youth a purse of silver pieces—more money than he had ever seen before. The spectators again raised a shout. Alan was trembling like an aspen; then casting his pipes from him, he darted to poor Elspat, threw his arms round her neck, and kissed her. "Ha, ha!" shouted the rough soldiers, "the Highlander kissed his mother!"

And this favourite strathspey is called by that name even unto this day, as any collection of Scottish dance music will testify.

"Where did'st thou learn to produce such music?" said James, regarding the youth with admiration. Alan raised his grateful, tearful eyes to the monarch's face, and answered simply:

"My king-I went to Nature."

TO MY OLD DOG'S PORTRAIT.

(While expecting my new dog.)

A LMOST all of your little hour was mine, almost every grain of its sand;

Twelve whole years, day and night, you were mine, and I think, my dog, you could understand,

When we were left alone on a wreck, and you missed the touch of a vanish'd hand.

But the touch of the gentle hand that never took life, nor harm'd a living thing, O, the lingering touch that I found on your hair, half-pain, and half-comforting, The touch of the vanish'd hand on your hair was love—in which is no vanishing.

Reproach there is none, my pet, in your pretty eyes that shine from their shaggy lair; I may love and cherish another dog, now you have done with my love and care, But no other dog can be you, with the touch of the vanished hand on your hair.

THE.

10STNOBLE ORDERS:

By MARY HOWARTH.

SENTIments
as beautiful as they
were natural and
laudable
prompted
the institution of
Orders—
the visible
signs of
chivalry.

So ancient, indeed, is their establishment that the date thereof cannot be fixed. It may be taken to be contemporaneous with the recognition of chivalry, and therefore legendary. The very earliest awakenings of the human mind to the

conception of goodness, and honesty, and bravery, and care for the weak—elements all of the grand quality—have cried out for something apparent to represent the discovery—the discovery, that is to say, that the gentler passions can rival the baser in power, indeed, can mingle with them, to the strengthening and purifying of both. Orders, by which are meant badges, chains, stars, ribbons, and like tokens, became the expression of this knowledge. But they were not promiscuously assumed. That with which a man invests himself is held to be of small importance, compared with the honour that is conferred upon him. The

laurel wreath of the Greek athlete, poor in itself and absolutely worthless, was to him who won it more priceless than a king's crown. So with the Orders. They were instituted by monarchs as the recognition of certain deserving qualities in their liege-men, or as the symbol of a desire to honour to the utmost the virtues and nobility of their equals. Thus kings bestow the Orders of their countries upon other kings. The Order of the Garter is at the present time the decoration of the Emperor of Austria, the German Emperor, the King of the Hellenes, the King of Italy, the King of Denmark, the King of the Belgians, and other monarchs, as well as of several foreign grand dukes. Neither it nor the other Orders of our Royal House are hereditary. The sovereign, of course, owns and wears all. He or she is made a knight at coronation. The sons of the Royal House receive their Orders upon specific occasions. When a holder of an Order dies, his insignia are returned to the monarch who bestowed them, and are passed on to whomsoever the monarch shall delight to honour.

Before passing on to the National Orders of Great Britain and Ireland, which will form the bulk of the subject-matter or this article, it will interest if mention be made of the oldest Order Europe knows. This is the Golden Fleece, instituted by Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, at Bruges, in 1429 or 1430, and now the property, with equal rights, of the Emperors of Austria and the Kings of Spain. The badge of Burgundy—the briquet or steel, and the flint or firestone emitting flames—is to be seen in the collar, while the pendant represents a sheep—the Fleece of Jason. This curious and significant choice of flames is noticeable in another very famous Order,

the St. Esprit of France, founded by Henry III., King of France, in 1578. Flames, or a "glory," also surround the pendants of the many times varied Order of the Elephant (the Danish decoration) as it appeared in ancient days, before the medallion representing the Virgin with the infant

Saviour, was exchanged for the Elephant pendant. In the English Star of the Order of the Bath there is very much the same idea in the surrounding points.

What is known as the Most Noble Order of the Garter is the one held in highest reverence in our country.

It is the distinction bestowed upon foreign kings, and upon the dukes, earls, and marquesses of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, whose personal merit and conspicuous services to the country deserve the decoration. Though the second most coveted Order, that of the Thistle, is known as the most Ancient, as well as the Most Noble, Order, it is believed to be about two hundred years younger than the Garter. Among the noblemen who are Knights of the Garter now are the Marquess of Salisbury, the Earl of Rosebery, the Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of

Westminster, and the Marquess of Abergavenny. When a Knight of the Thistle receives the Garter, he tenders the Thistle back to his sovereign.

Tradition has



so dear a figure of those bygone days that romancists would accept it willingly were there not a more chivalrous rendering still of the Garter's institution. It is the one attributed to Edward III. Everyone knows the charming story; the splendid pageant at the Court, the amazing and

discomfiting mishap to the Countess of Salisbury, and the King's rare tact and beauteous courtliness. "Honi soit qui mal y pense," said he, picking up the garter and circling it upon his own leg. Edward saved the situation with a grace so consummate, that

merely as an example of chivalry the most supreme, the act deserved to live. It is meet that a knight should hasten to the aid of beauty in distress. But he more than proved himself a tactician and a Cavalier. On this occasion he recognised his opportunity and seized it. Himself the first knight to wear the badge, and it the identical innocent cause of so tremendous an episode, he created the knightly order that to this day has for its emblem the single garter and the motto tender but stern, "Honi soit qui mal y pense." "Evil be to him that evil thinks." It

is a warning as well as a maledic-

tion.

But the knee strap was not to be the only reminder of the incident, glorified though it was into a band of



THE ORDER OF THE GARTER.

tried to attribute to Richard of the Lion Heart the institution of the Order of the Garter. Richard is so essentially a picturesque figure of history that one is willing to believe anything romantic concerning him. To him, it was averred, St. George, England's patron saint, sent a dream in which a particular kind of leathern garter was advised, nay, commanded, for the king's men, so that in battle friend might know friend. The legend is so pleasant, and Richard

blue silk or cloth, clasped with rich silver gilt embroidered with the motto, and having a pendant also of silver gilt. Edward III. caused to be made for himself a gorgeous tunic of blue woollen cloth edged with ermine, with which was a capuchon or hood, and upon the two had embroidered no fewer than one hundred and sixty-eight garters, and the motto the same number of times repeated, with, as a special shoulder decoration, a shield argent charged with the cross

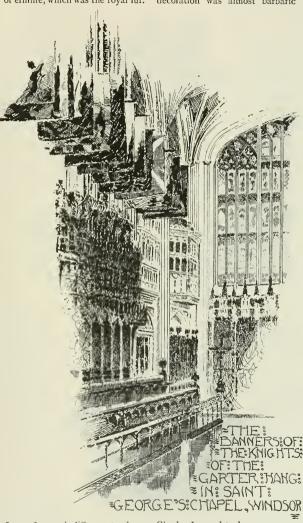
of St. George, gules. For his Knights Companion of the Order he commanded the same edged with miniver, instead of ermine, which was the royal fur.

When a pestilence raged, he altered the colour of the robe to black, symbolical of sorrow and abasement: and upon diminishment. once more changed it. this time for sanguine ingrain.

Other sovereigns made further additions and sundry alterations. Richard II. preferred a violet ingrain to the sanguine, but later, changing his mind, adopted white, which he afterwards superseded with the original colour blue. Purple was Oueen Eliz-

abeth's choice. James I., too indifferent to dress to trouble to change existing modes, retained the purple; but Charles I. brought blue again into use, which colour the robe remains, with the addition of a surcoat and hood of crimson. To Henry VIII., whose delight in fine raiment and much decoration was almost barbaric in its fervour.

is due the prestige of the Collar's introduction, from which the George. which had before been worn upon a ribbon or an ordinary chain. depended. An illustration shows the pattern of the Collar, which is the Garter and motto repeated. linked together with knotted ropes. The George is enamelled in proper heraldic colours, and is a pendant representing the patron saint in the act of killing the dragon. The lesser George, called the Star, introduced, it is believed, by



Charles I., used to be worn upon a ribbon round the neck, but now is disposed across the left shoulder. This ribbon suffered many changes. It had been black and pale blue, but from that colour was altered to its present deep blue by the Hanoverian House, in order to differentiate between

knights of that creation and those made by the Pretender. The banners of the Knights of the Garter hang in St. George's Chapel, Windsor.

The Order second in importance to the Garter, that of the Thistle, is believed to have been inaugurated by James V. of Scotland, in or about the year 1450. Some chroniclers fix the date much earlier, declaring that Archaius, King of the Scots, who fought against Saxon Athelstan. saw in the heavens on the eve

of the shape

known as St. Andrew's.

This is as it

may have been.

There is no

more than tra-

ditionary evi-

dence of its

truth. The

Before leaving this branch of the before the battle (which he won, by-the-by), a cross subject, it may be mentioned that the Russian

Andrew clad in a green tunic and purple surcoat,

"standing upon a mount vert and supporting his

cross argent." The "radiant

star" which surrounds the saint,

was added in 1714 to the rest of

the device. The motto of the

Most Ancient and Most Noble

Order is "Nemo me impune

lacessit "-" No one annoys me

with impunity." It includes the

sovereign and sixteen knights, a

dean, a secretary, the lyon king

of arms, the gentleman usher, and

the green rod, besides extra

knights, consisting of princes of the royal house of England.

> house has an Order of St.

pendant of

which displays

the martyr

stretched upon

the

Andrew.

COLLAR OF SI. ANDREW.

his cross. The knighthoods of Eng-

Andrew, but in Scottish history no mention is made of the thistle as a national emblem until the reign of James III.

It matters little, however, to whom the institution of this honourable knighthood is due. It passed from Scotland to England with our Stuart king, James II., who was James VII. of the northern kingdom, in 1687, was crushed by the Revolution of the following year, and was restored by Queen Anne. The collar is composed of

thistles and sprigs of rue, the "herb of grace." The thistles are gold and the rue is enamelled. The pendant star is of gold, and embodies a figure of St.

PENDANT OF ST. ANDREW OR THE THISTLE.

Order is known as that of the Thistle and of St. land and Scotland are followed by that of Ireland. The Most Illustrious Order of St. Patrick, with its motto "Quis separabit" -" Who shall separate?" -had as its originator His Majesty George III., and as its occasion the circumstances that led to the union, in 1800, of the three countries, England, Scotland, and Ireland; a measure so ardently desired by George III., that when it was brought to pass, he declared that he should "ever consider it as the happiest event of his reign." One is tempted to

refrain from a further quotation, seeing that the one obviously apt is the croak of Lord Cornwallis. But here it is, grimly prophetic. Said he: "This country could not be saved without the Union, but you must not take it for granted that it will be



saved by it. Much care and management will be

necessary, and if the British govern ment place their confidence in an Irish faction. all will ruined."

The ribbon of the Order



of tabinet and lined with white silk. One would have expected green to be the best representative shade of Old Erin, but it was already that of the Order of St. Andrew, and so could not be duplicated. The gold collar, composed of red and white roses enamelled, alternating with harps, bound together by golden knots, has for its centre-

are of the same colour, made

mounting a harp of gold, from which hangs the oval badge, the cross of St. Patrick surmounted by a shamrock bear-

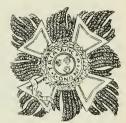
piece an imperial crown sur-

ing the Imperial crown on its leaves. The Star of the Order is circular in form, instead of oval. The

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, for the time of his office, is the Grand Master of this Order of Knighthood. There are twenty-two knights besides the sovereign and princes, a Chancellor, an Athlone Pursuivant,

a Genealogist, and an Usher of the Black Rod

The Most Honourable Order of the Bath brings before us a knighthood very familiar to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Though some such Order had existed



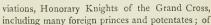
STAR OF THE ORDER OF THE BATH.

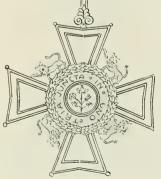
from much earlier times, it is to George I. that the distinction of creation is in this instance due. Its date of institution was 1725. The collar of this Order was originally formed of nine Imperial

crowns of gold with five demiarches visible. and no caps, also eight roses and thistles issuing from a sceptre, all enamelled "proper," as the

of St. Patrick is sky-blue, and the mantle and hoop heraldic term has it, and linked together with white knots. The shamrock was added to this device later. The motto, "Tria Juncta in uno"-" Three joined in one" -shows on the medallion of the pendant, upon which the British Lion fills the gaps between the points of the crossframe. The Star of the Order is very elegant. The ribbon is crimson.

> This Order, which is thus made widely comprehensive, is subdivided into Military Knights of the Grand Cross, Civil Knights of the same, with the initials G.C.B. as abbre-





the second class Military Knights Commanders and Civil Knights Commanders, abbreviated to K.C.B.: of the third class Military and Civil Companions, abbreviated to C.B., and Honorary Companions.

Several decorations belong to this century. The Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, instituted in 1818, has for its motto "Auspicium melioris aevi "-" A pledge of better times." It has its classes, like that of the Bath, composed of the G.C.M.G. (Knights of the Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George), Honorary Knights of the Grand Cross, Knights Commanders (K.C.M.G.); Honorary Knights Commanders; Companions (C.M.G.), and Honorary Companions. Order also numbers a great many members.

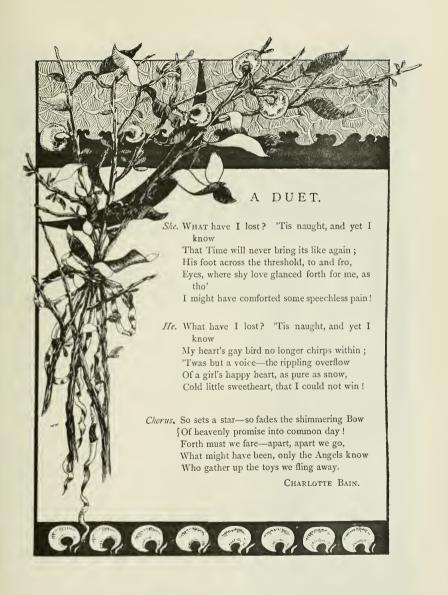
Our own Oueen has instituted, for men, the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire (1878), the Grand Master of which is the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, for the time being, and the Distinguished Service Order (1886); for women, Her Majesty most graciously and appropriately established, in 1862, the Royal Order of Victoria and Albert, and, in 1878, the Imperial Order of the Crown of India.

To these Orders belong the princesses, by birth and marriage, of the royal house, also many foreign princesses and ladies who have identified themselves with elements of distinction at home or in India. The Crown of India is, as well, the decoration of a certain number of Begums and Maharanees of India. The Royal Order of Victoria and Albert has the profiles of the Queen and Prince Consort as a medallion, and that of the Imperial Crown of India the initials V.R.I.

The V.C. decoration has been left to the last, and is included in the list of Most Noble Orders, though it is not strictly an Order, because it seems so appropriately to circle the grand chain from the institution of the Garter to itself. It is the Victoria Cross, created by the Queen at the close of the Crimean campaign, as a recognition of conspicuous bravery in the face of great peril. All sorts and conditions of soldiers and sailors hold the Cross, and happy, indeed, are the possessors thereof in such an honourable prize. The Cross is a Maltese one, bearing the royal crown in the centre, with a lion surmounting it, and the words, "For Valour," indented on a scroll below. The ribbon is red for the army, and blue for the This decoration expresses the glory of chivalry, just as the Garter does. It is an honour with which I can appropriately close my necessarily scanty remarks upon a very wide subject.



VICTORIA CROSS





attract customers without the display of the bush on the long pole. But this was not the way the road-side inn-

keepers and alehouse-keepers were inclined to view it. They resorted to the use of such long poles, stretching across the road so far that they "did tend to the deterioration of the houses in which they were placed," and also were apt to come in the way of riders' heads; and Acts had to be passed to limit the length of the poles, the Act of 1375 limiting them to seven feet. The reason why a bush was hung out over the alehouse door, so far as we can learn, is this: Originally, an imitation of a bottle or a jar in wood, or imitation of this again in leather, was the sign, but these solid blocks of wood were heavy, apt to make noise, and to come to grief in a gale of wind; and so, as a substitute, anything that suggested wood came to be used, and by-and-by the bush was adopted, and remained the sign of the alehouse for a very long time. To attest this so far there are still inns, here and there, bearing the name of "The Leather Bottle," one of them at Cobham, which Charles Dickens described and immortalised as the place where Mr. Pickwick and his friends went from Rochester to find the disconsolate and hypochondriac Tupman, Chaucer very quaintly tells us that the Sompnour had—

"A garland set upen his heed,
As gret as it were for an ale-stake."

Beer was the great potation for the common olks, and vast quantities were drunk by travellers along the roads. It will be remembered that Chaucer's Canterbury Pilgrims stopped at one of these road-side alchouses to refresh themselves, and that the pardoner would not begin his tale till he had partaken:

"But first quod he her at this ale-stake, I will both drink and byten on a cake."

The honses of this class were mostly small, of one storey, and with no kind of show about them; not like the alchouses that are nowadays to be found, even on country roads, with a well-painted sign and nicely carpeted private room, and clean, well-sanded bar, where the peasants drink and discuss the news. There was but one room for all and sundry, in most cases; and in the evenings, we read, that the company was often rough and noisy, and that fights were not uncommon.

"At these taverns every day you will find they remain, drinking there all day as soon as their work is done. Many find it the thing to come there to drink. They spend there, 'tis perfectly true, more than they have gained all day. Do not ask if they fight when they are tipsy; the Provost has several pounds in fines for it during the year." **

In a great many cases the keepers of these ale-houses brewed their own beer. Langland, in his "Vision of Piers the Ploughman," describes some of these, and the poet Skelton has especially de scribed one, an old ugly woman, who kept a house near Leatherhead, in Surrey. "Travellers and tynkers" she entertained; but many of her neighbours also patronised her, for we are told:—

"Some go straight thyder, Be it slaty or slider; They hold the bye waye They care not what men saye, Be that as it may; Some loth to be espyde, Start in at the backsyde Over the hedge and pale; And all for the good ale."

So that even then there was a back-door squad, as there is still in many small towns and villages in the country, who "love the good ale," but do not wish to be seen going after it. And many of this old crone's customers were so fond of the ale, that they parted with all their money, and had to pay for the rest of the drink in kind:

"Instead of coyne and monny,
Some bring her a conny,
And some a pot with honey,
Some a salt, and some a spone,
Some their hose, and some their shone,"

The accommodation in some of the smaller hostelries and herbagies was not much to boast of. They were neither clean nor quiet, and in some cases overrun with fleas, which did not arise with modern civilisation, therefore, but are antiquated. Beds were certainly not dear. Common people could get such beds as there were for a penny for two nights. In London and larger towns it was dearer—a penny a head per night. Living is on the same scale. Eggs or vegetables they may have for a farthing; a chicken or capon for a penny; and other things at a similar rate.

With regard to the ordinary hostelries, there was an amount of freedom and social give-and-take such as we have nowadays no notion of. It is well typified in the table-d'hôte of these days.

^{*} Christine de Pisan.

This was literally to eat your dinner at the host's table. We cannot understand a great deal in the life of that time, unless we bear this fact in mind. It made the host a man of much more importance than he is now. He was on a ground of equality with all who came and went. If a man wished to eat in his own room, and did not invite the host to join him, it was considered not only haughty and ill-mannered, but ungentlemanly, save, indeed, where the position of the guest was so marked as to put the idea of so associating with his host utterly out of the question. But to carry off this style the traveller needed to use the greatest dignity and state! and, of course, he had to pay well for it.

Of the famous "Tabard" Inn, as it was in the days of Chaucer, we, unfortunately, have no authentic print. It was completely destroyed in the great fire in Southwark in 1676. There is the best reason for believing that the good folks of that day, however, rebuilt it in very much the same style as it had been. It will be noticed that three sides of a square here enclose a courtyard, and along one side of it runs the kind of balcony we have spoken of, which, as already said, was almost an essential for the courtyard of an inn of this character in those days. In the engraving of the building which succeeded this one, and lasted up to 1874, when it was demolished, this kind of balcony runs along two sides of the square from end to end, the roofs projecting so as completely to cover the balcony from sun and rain.

> " Befel that, in that secoun " on a day In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay, Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage To Caunterbury with ful devout corage, At night was come into that hostelrie Wel nyne and twenty in a compainye, Of sondry folk, by aventure i-falle In felawschipe, and pilgrims were thei alle, That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde. The chambres and the stables were"n wyde, And wel we were'n esed atté beste. And shortly when the souné was to reste So hadde' I spoken with hem everyschon."

Chaucer, who, no doubt, had himself been a pilgrim to Canterbury, and had slept at the "Tabard" for an early start in the morning, ex-

presses himself well pleased with the wide chambers and stables, and with the manner in which they were in the very best way attended to and enabled to take their ease in their inn.*

We can see them marching forth from the "Tabard" courtyard in the sunlight of that early spring morning, led by the stalwart miller as he blows his bagpipes; Harry Baily busy going from one to another to make sure that all is right: the wife of Bath, gat-toothed, smiling, pleased at the prospect before her: the Nonne Prioresse in converse with one of her three "priestes"; the knight, who had fought in many battles, looking severe but knightly, though in shabby attire, beside the pleasant, youthful figure of the squire, his son; the monk full of talk, and the begging friar intent and business-like; the merchant with his forked beard and his head held high, and the clerk of Oxford, thin and lithe, speaking "schort and quick"; the Sergeant-of-Law, holding the Franklin in talk; the Sompnour and the Pardoner, smiling at their naive remarks to each other; and the "poure" but pious persoun, who

> "Cristés' lore and his apostles twelve He taughte, but first he followed it himselve,"

leaning over and speaking in low, soft tones to his worthy brother, the ploughman, mounted, as Chaucer is careful to tell us, "on a mere." So they go, with din and rattle over the stones, till the last of the train has disappeared from the view of those they had left behind them at the "Tabard." As they went they awakened the deepest interest in every town they passed through—"what with the noise of their singing and with the sound of their piping, and with the jangling of their Canterbury bells, and with the barking of dogs after them, they made more noise than if the King came there with all his clarions and minstrelsy."†

To few inns has it fallen to have such an imperishable record as the "Tabard." Chaucer's genius has immortalised it. On the beam of the gateway facing the street was inscribed:—"This

† William Calder's "Chaucer."

Spring: "When that Aprillé with his schowres swoote, The drought of Marche hath percéd to the roote, And bathed every veyne in swich lieour."

^{*} It is now the Talbot Inn, No. 75, High Street, Borough Road. Its present title is a corruption of Tabard, the name given "to a jacket, or sleeveless coat, whole before, open on both sides, with a square collar, winged at the shoulder," somewhat similar to that worn by heralds in pageants and processions, and when worn "in the wars," like it having arms embroidered or otherwise depicted thereon.

is the inn where Sir Jeffry Chaucer and the nine-and-twenty pilgrims lay in their journey to Canterbury, anno 1383."

You cannot conceive an inn without the landlord any more than you can conceive of summer without the sun. Thoreau has painted a picture of the ideal landlord such as he was pretty much in the Middle Ages. Only in very exceptional cases is anything of this sort to be found now; when, if you travel and go to an inn you are, for most part, merely a certain number with no kind of human associations attached to you. It was different then. The landlord was central to every company. Harry Baily was so at the "Tabard." Chaucer gives him a good character alike as host and as a man. Here is his account:—

"Greet cheere made our host us everichon,
And to the souper sette he us anon;
And served us with vitaille atte leste.
Strong was the wyn, and wel to drinke us leste.
A semely man oure hooste he was withalle
For to han been a marschal in an halle;
A large man he was with eyghen stepe,
A fairer burgeys was ther noon in Chepe;
Bold of his speche and wys and well i-taught,
And of manhede him lakkede right naught.
Eck thereto he was right a merry man,
And after souper playen be bygan,
And spak of myrthe amongés othre thinges,
When that we hadde maad our rekenynges."

The landlord of these days was thus a man of such resource, education and wit as to put himself quite naturally on a footing of equality with the guests and travellers, with but few exceptions. He was in a way their "guide, philosopher and friend," as it is hardly possible an inn landlord could be now. A man of a free manner, and often not without his touches of true gentlehood. Harry Baily accompanies the Pilgrims at his own charges, is to give a "souper" on their return, and a prize to the one that tells the best tales on the way, and is most disposed to be generous and well-inclined towards them all.

The "Chequers of the Hope," where the Pilgrims rested at Canterbury, was evidently of the same type of inn. Dean Stanley tells us in his "Memorials of Canterbury" that it was, like houses in Switzerland, entirely composed of massive timber, chiefly oak and chestnut, and that it had an open oblong court, precisely like that of the "Tabard." "In the upper storey, which," he says, "was approached by stairs from the outside which have

now disappeared, is a spacious chamber, supported on wooden pillars and covered with a high-pitched wooden roof—traditionally known as 'the dormitory of the hundred beds.' Here," writes the Dean, "the mass of pilgrims slept; and many must have been the prayers, the tales, the jests, with which these old timbers have rung—many and deep the slumbers which must have refreshed the weary travellers who by horse and foot had at last reached the sacred city. Great, too, must have been the interest with which they walked out of this crowded dormitory at break of day on the flat leads which may be still seen running round the roof of the court, and commanding a full view of the vast extent of the northern side of the Cathedral."

If there is any truth in the picture of the herbary or garden given in the supplementary tale in Urry's "Canterbury Pilgrims," then another feature—and an interesting feature—of these mediæval inns was the large garden often attached to them; not without their well-laid out and beautiful flower-beds. The wife of Bath is represented as inducing the Nonne Prioresse to walk with her there, and the garden is thus described:

"To see the herbes grow,
And all the alleys fair, and pavid, and raylid, and y-makid,
The Varage and the Yssope, y-fretted, and y-staked,
And other beddes by, and by fresh y-dight,
For comers to the host right a sportful sight," *

But the mistresses of the inns, if we may trust Chaucer, were sometimes self-willed, shrewish, and tyrannical. After the tale of Melibeus and his wife, the patient Prudence, Harry Baily says:—

"I hadde lever than a barell of ale, That goode life my wif had herde this tale; For she n'is no thing of swich patience, As was this Melibeus wif Prudence.

And if that any neighbour of mine.
Wol not in cherche to my wif incline,
Or be so hardy to hire to trespace,
When she cometh home she rampeth in my face,
And cryeth; false coward, areke thy wif,
By Corpus Domini, I will have thy knif,
And thou shall have my distaff, and go spinne."

And what a mark these Pilgrims and pilgrimages have left on our language as well as on our literature! "If we may trust etymological conjectures,"

* This supplementary tale, though it does not in style resemble Chaucer very closely, is said to have been written within a few years of Chaucer's death.

says Dean Stanley, "a Roamer was one who had visited the Apostles' graves at Rome; a Saunterer, one who had wandered through 'the Sainte Terre' or Holy Land; and, in like manner, the easy canter of our modern rider is an abbreviation, comparatively recent, of the Canterbury gallop, derived, no doubt, from the ambling pace of the 'Canterbury Pilgrims." Dr. Johnson in his Dictionary gives Canterbury gallop as the full expression of which "canter" is only the shortened colloquial expression. When a story was told that was a little too improbable it was called a "Canterbury" or "Canterbury Tale," because of the extravagant and grotesque narratives with which the Pilgrims were wont to beguile their journey, or shorten the hours that else might have hung heavily on their hands in the inns. And the name-Canterburyitself, how far back it points us. Kent is the only county in England which retains to this day the early Saxon or rather Jute name. Kent is a refined form of Cant. Cant-wara-byrig is Kentmens'-borough, that is, for short, Canterbury. So, when you speak of So-and-so taking a canter, you are, by that very

common-looking word, pointing the historical-minded hearer very far back.

There were many other inns that well deserved celebrity. There was "La Belle Sauvage" which gave the name to the Yard now associated with the firm of Cassell & Co. Here, too, there was a spacious courtyard—out of which the wagons rattled and the riders trotted; and it, too, was furnished with wide balconies which overlooked the courtyard almost all round it. The real meaning of this title is that the inn or yard was once possessed by Isabell Savage, who conveyed the property to the Cutlers' Company. Bell Savage became La Belle Sauvage, whether the Bell Savage of real life answered to the flattering designation or not! Then there was the old "Bell" in Holborn and the "Three Tuns" in Bishopsgate, and many others scattered through the London City of these days, not to speak of the "Queen's Head," and more notable still, the "Bell" in Southwark, which Chaucer referred to as being near to the "Tabard," and in such a way as clearly indicates that it, too, was well-known-a kind of familiar way-mark.

A MAJORCAN VILLAGE.

By FLORENCE FREEMAN.

WHERE shall we go? is the question raised by those who, at the first approach of winter, are in search of summer sunshine and unspoiled nature rather than the repetition of fashionable English life, five o'clock teas and the latest scandal, More than once the so-called "Riviera," both French and Italian, has proved unkind, and the snowfall of last winter has not a little shaken the faith of some as to the perfections of Algeria. A middle course, therefore, may at least be suggested. Why not try Majorca? Take a "quinta" (summer-house) on the charming outskirts of the capital of the greater of the Balearic Islands, on the sunny Terreno, as it is called, facing the beautiful bay of Palma, sheltered by the pleasant pinewoods that surround the fortress of Belver - the prison house of Lacy and of Jovellanos-and commanding a view of the massive pile of the cathedral, the foundation and last resting-place of Don Jaime 1., the Aragonese conqueror of the island. Or let those to whom the modern tram-line offers

no attraction seek the shelter of the little village on the northern coast, of which the following account endeavours to give a faithful picture.

"C'est la verte Helvétie sous le ciel de la Calabre, avec la solemnité et le silence de l'Orient," wrote George Sand, of Majorca, and truly no description could fit better. At the close of one of the brightest days of February, 1893, after the full enjoyment of southern sunshine and sea-breezes - sandwiched, so to speak, by past memories of Chopin and Spiridion at Valldemosa, and present participations of archducal hospitality at Miramar, once the abode of the "enlightened doctor," Ramón Lull-we gradually descend by the windings of a modern highway that, from its admirable construction, may vie with the best of Roman roads, into the snugly-sheltered valley of Sollér. For one moment, from some sharp turn of our rapid down-hill journey there is a last glimpse of blue waters brightened by the fast vanishing gleam of slanting sunlight, while above the rough outline of the Balearic Alps, roseate

still with a wondrous radiance, stretches the soft transparent veil of opal atmosphere enfolding the early heralds of a star-lit night. How beautiful these Mediterranean sunsets are. We have seen so many, yet we never weary of the repeated glory, "which the angels work out for us daily, and yet vary eternally." The twinkling lights steal out as we drive through the little town, which, with its population of something like eight thousand, Sollér boasts itself to be, and alight at the fondecita of La Paz. Simple and beautifully clean is our small inn, qualities which, added to the excellence of the bread-are we not in the "Golden Island" whose corn Pliny praised for being very weighty?-and the charms of Madelena, the daughter of our amo, soon help to make us feel quite at home. At night we may realize the final spell of the three-fold attraction of Mallorca* above quoted. For with all the solemnity of a Muezzin does the Watchman of the Night, the Sereno, as he is styled, break through the perfect stillness with a chaunt that for tone and wording might be wholly Arabic-

"A-la-ba-do se-a Di-os las do-ce de la no-che, se-re-no."

But shall we confess that there are nights when we resent being roused to hear that the sky is *screno*, or, which is far worse, when lying awake from a curious fascination to catch the weird, dirge-like ending, we are rewarded only by the more melancholy *no-bla-do*.

After the serenest of nights we are up early and fortified by the local encimada which our stay in the capital has taught us to fully appreciate, we are ready to do all that is to be done, or to do nothing but tomar el sol. First a word, however, on the encimada for those who have not experienced that luxury—though possibly it might be better left undescribed, for, to say that its chief ingredient is of a greasy nature, is, at the least, not inviting. Yet this Majorcan muffin, fashioned after an ammonite stone, out of the most diaphanous pastry, and set before one with as little delay as possible after its withdrawal from the oven, once tasted, will never be neglected. We duly present our letter of introduction to Sr. D. Nicolás M.yM., and his wife, who do everything in their power to make our little stay a pleasant one, and under their guidance we see the interiors of several private houses and gardens, with the additional enjoyment of feasting on and carrying off as many oranges as we like, not to speak of bouquets of roses, violets, jasmine, lavender, etc.

Set amidst the finest scenery of the Balearic Isles, the rich vale of Sollér extends some twelve miles at the foot of a chain of mountains which, before marine convulsions sundered them from the mainland, formed the natural continuation of the sierra that guards the fertile gardens of Murcia and Valencia. Amphitheatre-wise, they shelter the rich crops of Mallorca from exposure to the north-west wind, and chief among the various puigs,* or peaks, stands forth as special guardian of our Majorcan village, the Puig Major, about fifteen hundred mètres above the sea-level. King Alfonso V. called Mallorca a precious pearl among his king doms; and though its capital, with its architectural and natural beauties, undoubtedly bore away the palm, Sollér, with its wealth of golden fruit, was esteemed by Mallorca's historian, Dameto, "the Paradise or Tempe" of the island-kingdom, and its soil the most fertile in "Oyl, Fruits, and Silk." Orange, olive, almond, apple, medlar, mulberry, cherry, walnut, and fig-trees are here in abundance, nor is there lacking the "variety of Citrons of an admirable taste," and there is no single bit of the rough mountain-side that does not take its share in the general cultivation. The neatest of walls, in which each rude stone is often fitted in evenly to form a pattern, and that commonly enough without cement, support and part off the terraces belonging to various small proprietors, of which the chief products are wheat, barley, hemp, and flax. There is hardly any fruit, flower, or vegetable that could not easily be grown here, were there not lacking to the Majorcan not only the spirit of enterprise, but a sufficient demand in the home and foreign markets, and this more especially since France gets her earliest supplies from her most southern garden in Algeria. In the seventeenth century Majorca enjoyed an apparently steady trade in oil with England and Holland.† But now, besides her manufactures, her chief export

^{*} Spanish for Majorca. In the seventeenth century the inhabitants called the capital, as well as the island, Mallorca, though its name then, as now, was Palma.

^{*} *Puig, pic,* or *puy,* as we know it in Auvergne. The *g* is pronounced like *tch* in *witch*.

[†] From a letter of Mr. (afterwards Earl) Stanhope to his father, then British Minister at Madrid, given in "Spain under Charles the Second," by Lord Mahon.

trade is in oranges, and Sollér may hope to rank again as one of the Spanish ports from which the greatest quantity of fruit is sent forth. For the present, owing to her crop having decreased to less than a quarter of its former amount, in consequence of havoc wrought by disease, she has been somewhat outstripped by the flourishing province of Valencia. We did not hear of any ill befalling the almond-trees, so no diminution need be feared in the making of the famous Turron, as important a Christmas sweetmeat to the Spaniard as plum-pudding is to the Englishman-traditionally speaking, that is - for the latter overrated lump of heaviness cannot compare with the enticing almond-paste, either in its hard or soft form, which is consumed from La Natividad de Nuestro Señor to La Purificación de Nuestra Señora. A brisk trade is also carried on in figs, special care being given to the cultivation of the white ones, which prove more delicate for drying than the black, and this industry is the more to be commended, as not long since this fruit was looked on as only fit for fattening the pigs to be sent to Barcelona.

Our kind friends drive us out one afternoon to the Puerto de Sollér, of which, from the Calle del Mar, we have already had a distant glimpse. It lies rather less than two miles from the town, and, on drawing near, looks to us, in its mountaincradle, more like to a peaceful lake than a harbour in active communication with the outer world. But such it is, and this very afternoon there is not a little animation on the mole, caused by the presence of the steamer Leon d'Oro-an English-built boat, by the way-which is busy lading a heavy cargo of oranges and lemons, the scent of which fills the air almost to excess. Leaving the carriage, we walk on as far as the lighthouse, and here, clear of the hill-spurs that, on a miniature scale, give to the little port of Sollér somewhat of the character of the Bocche di Cattaro, we are face to face with grand waves breaking upon the scarped red rocks. Far as the eye can travel there is nothing but the blue waters, and it is hard to believe that between us and the Spanish coast the distance is not greater than ninety-three miles. A clamber through pinetrees and thickets of prickly pear, takes us to the top of the hill crowned by a small church, on the northern side of which is a little platform with stone seats, whence is enjoyed a splendid miramar. This north-western coast greatly needed its high wall-like rocks to protect it against the sudden attack of pirates. After Majorca was wrested from the Saracens by the conquering hand of Don Jaime I, of Aragon,* many were the attempts made by the Mussulman to retake the goodly land now held by the Christian. Here and there on the mountain-tops may still be seen the ruined atalayas, or watch-towers, from which a sharp look-out was kept, and alarm given by fires if any enemy appeared on the coast. When the warning signals were seen, the bells sounded in the pueblos, and the cry arose of " Moros, Moros en la mar." On the 11th of May, Sollér keeps its Fiesta de las valentas doñas, in celebration of the heroic resistance made against the attack of pirates in 1561. Francesca and Caterina Casanovas are said to have been the two heroines by whose energetic bravery the enemy was beaten back.

From the topmost rocks that guard the harbour of Soller, we make our way down into the quaint staircase alleys of the fishing hamlet. Beneath the shade of the woodwork of trellised vines sit the fishermen mending their nets, the women, clad in brightest of short scarlet petticoats, deftly handling the distaff at the open doorways; here and there a baby securely lodged in the most primitive of go-carts, while the head of some murillo cherub, with soft dark velvet eyes, shoots shyly forth from an upper casement. Here would seem to be an, as yet, untrodden field for brush and palette, and the mellowed tones of yellow and green skiffs, backed by a noble group of "umbrellas open," whose deep green foliage contrasts so strikingly, and yet harmonizes so surely, with the bright blue wavelets dancing in the sunlight as they gently break upon the pebble beach, call for a better illustration than mere words can give. Indeed there is an endless variety of pleasant pictures to be found within and without, above and around, this Majorcan mountain valley. The characteristic part of old Sollér is to be seen from the bridge that crosses the now dry bed of a mountain torrent, which, to judge from its rough tumbling boulders, fully knows how to make occasional amends for being waterless the greater part of the

^{*} Majorca was won by "El Conquistador" in 1229, and portioned out to nine noble families. It remained an independent kingdom till the fourteenth century, when it was united under Pedro IV. to the crown of Aragon.

year. But the unattractiveness of some modern houses in the newer streets is made up for by the many glimpses of bright gardens through the solid and lofty arched doorways. For among these friendly islanders, whose continual peace and happy ease won from Strabo the title of the "Peaceable," no front door is closed save, maybe, that of some hill-cottage, and then only against dog or pig, the key being left on the outside—and the patriarchal chairs, grandfather's clock, large round vari-coloured mats, called esteras, and snow-white long-haired sheep-skins, appeal invitingly to the stranger, as does the twisted balustrade which is found in even the simplest houses, together with the favourite blue and yellow Spanish tiles on the steps of the staircase. And everywhere we are courteously entreated of the inhabitants, whose friendliness is proverbial, in spite of the unlimited abuse heaped upon them by the above-quoted French novelist. Though thankful to bid farewell to its shores, she, however, fully appreciated the exquisite nature of cette île enchantée, and hard, indeed, would be the heart that could be proof against the surroundings of such a cottage as that in which Catalina lives.

Wandering one morning up the hillside by one of the thousand enticing pathways, we light upon an ideal nest in a bower of orange-trees, trees that seem fairy-like in their power; for do we not count twenty-six oranges on a bough so fragile that it would hardly appear able to bear the weight of one? Then what a scent from the almond and bean blossom, what a humming of bees and cooing of doves! And along the little terrace, to give us friendly welcome with the now familiar words of salutation, "Bon dia, tenga," comes the dark-eyed maiden who lives here with her widowed mother. She sets chairs for us to rest, offering us the while the finest of the golden fruit. The inside of the whitewashed cottage is a model of neatness. Round the ledge of the large domed chimney are set pots of all manner of shapes; the favourite rice is cooking on the fire, and while her mother attends to this important item of the midday meal, Catalina is easily pursuaded into showing us her rebocillo and volante. These are the local names given to the fine net or blonde head-dress, according as it is worn rounded or pointed on the breast. It falls upon the shoulders at the back, the hair, braided

in one single plait, escaping from beneath; but this graceful head-gear, once in general use, is now worn solely by the peasants during the summertime, a silk kerchief being arranged on the head in the winter season. A bright coloured skirt, a short black bodice of merino or silk, with sleeves to the elbow, fastened by some half-dozen silver-gilt buttons set with amethysts or other stones, the sleeves of the inner white chemisette being linked by another pair of the same, and a gold or silver necklet with a Maltese cross round the neck-for the bodice is cut a little low-complete a very becoming costume, which one regrets to see is only too rapidly giving way to the commonplace attire of the capital. Of the picturesque dress worn by the men, and of which the oriental character is pointed out by George Sand,* we saw next to nothing, if one may except a few countrymen in the wide bagging bufas or breeches, and largebrimmed hats ornamented with cord and tassel.

An expedition one Sunday afternoon to Fornalutz, a village perched high on the mountainside, and completely hidden from Sollér by a bend of the hills, gives us our best impression of the Majorcan country-people enjoying their peaceful siesta. Our drive thither is made in a two-wheel cart of the country, which can no more boast itself of springs than the tartana, the classical carriage of Valencia. With difficulty we keep our gravity, still more our places, as each motion of the vehicle produces elaborate but involuntary bows on our part to the good people of Sollér as we are whirled through their narrow streets. The road we take is a pretty one, winding amid unwalled orchards of olive and fig-trees, many a quinta peeping from out the wealth of orange-groves. Our sturdy white nag makes but short work of the steep ascent to the village, and we are quickly landed on the chief plaza near the church. Here all Fornalutz seems gathered together, men and women afoot talking in groups, or seated on the stone staircase that leads upward to the mountain-top, and that we presently find to be-for us at least, time and strength being limited-a never-ending one. But the hour or more's climb of the zigzag steps is amply repaid by the beautiful view of the rich valley that lies beneath. There, the small villages, nestled within the hollow, are surrounded by their luxuriant gardens of fruit-trees, the white roof of house and

^{* &}quot;Un Hiver a Majorque," p. 125.

church standing out in reliet against a sky of unbroken blue. Higher up are plantations of olive and mulberry hedged in by either stone or cactus, every hanging shelf overshadowed by frowning rocks, being nurtured with an industry that does amends for want of space. A spreading carobtree offers us its welcome shade, which is gladly accepted, for indeed it is like to a summer's day, but with that charming freshness in the cir which we are wont to think belongs more specially to an English summer.

The Persian poet Ferdosi's description of the climate of the city Kung might apply to the Majorcan spring-time: "Its warmth was not heat, its coolness was not cold." The stillness of the air is only now and again broken by the distant bleating of sheep and goats on the rocky uplands, by the nearer tinkling of a rivulet, or by the humming of busy bees among the delicate pink blossom of almond and nectarine trees. The peasant woman, in her "bella robeta dels duimenges," tripping upwards at a pace that we envy, passes by us with friendly greeting, "Bon dia, Déu vos guart," homeward bent from the exercise of religious duties and exchange of friendly gossip. The women of Fornalutz, as those of Sollér, are decidedly goodlooking, with a soft, calm Madonna type of face and simplicity of manner. They toil all the week, mostly engaged in weaving excellent woollen and linen cloths for exportation, and the whirr of the machines introduced in the last few years is the most frequent sound that greets the ear on passing

the open doorways. Many of the men are employed in shoe-making.

In these hard times, however, from Majorca as elsewhere on the Spanish mainland, a large number of the inhabitants are driven to emigration, more generally in the Antilles. Illustrative of the intensely conservative nature of the Majorcan, it may be mentioned that the man who makes his fortune in the distant colony is, on his return to his native country, treated as a "nouvean riche," almost beyond contempt; but it should be added, in explanation, that, as the hospitality of the owner of the brand-new palace cannot be returned on an equal scale, it is easier not to recognise him.

Once more our steps retrace the first walk tracked out beside one of the numerous acequias, or narrow water-channels, handed down by the Saracens; then, crossing the "Torrente," and boldly trespassing through the cultivated plots of some small householder, we climb by convenient wall-steps to our favourite haunt beneath a stately palm. There, sheltered from the evening air by its wondrous canopy of fan-like plumage, we look across the fair gardens of Sollér to where a fast darkening line of sapphire denotes her little port; but—

" La nit sobre la terra estén son vel Y espira de la tarde el blanch estel."

and, upon the towering top of Puig Major descends the "black mantle of the enemy of day." We bid farewell to Sollér, but not without saying—
A reveure!

MY KNIGHT.

M Y little Knight and I together read
Of golden deeds from Spenser's "Faerie
Queen";
How Virtue over Wrong had Victor been

How Virtue over Wrong had Victor been, And Fear and Hate by Valour banished.

And I, half-laughing at his boyish face, And earnestness to take the tale for true, Half-jesting, ask'd him, "What, my.Knight, would you

Do, for your spurs in such-like faerie place?"

And, while I questioned, wistful at my heart, The vision touch'd me of those far-off years, Beyond the reach of mother's smiles or tears, In which my little Knight must play his part.

Courage I wish'd him, and that faith divine, To meet with valour all the ills of life, And fight the evil. Ever in the strife To keep his boyish heart, nor joy resign.

L. M. Scott.



"THE GARDEN THAT I LOVE."

OT for me your Ribbon-Garden!
Lawns with scarce a blade awry!
Gentle flowers, I pray you, pardon,
If I seem to pass you by,
Hardly knowing your dear faces,
In these prim and proper places!

There's a garden I love better,
Somewhere 'neath these English skies,
Suns shine brighter, rains fall wetter,
On that flowery paradise;
In a narrow space of ground
All the sweet o' the year is found.

Yonder in a shady alley
Violets blow in early spring;
There the lilies of the valley
All their subtle fragrance fling;
There the first pale primrose gleams,
And the frail anemone dreams,

In untamed yet gracious order, Flowers flourish as they will, And in every bed and border Wealthy bees can sip their fill; Tho' I must confess, alas! There the daisies star the grass! Here are sunflowers sunward turning, Meek hypaticas and stocks, Or some pert young lupin burning To outstrip the hollyhocks; Roses quite unknown to fame Blush as sweetly all the same!

Here are pansies, love-lies-bleeding, Wall-flowers and sweet-williams bold, There's a dandelion seeding In a clump of marigold! Nay, you might find pimpernels 'Neath those Canterbury-bells!

Flags, nasturtiums, phlox, verbena, Fox-glove with its open lip, Blossom in this green arena In a joyous fellowship; Country thrift, and London pride, Growing gaily side by side!

Such a scent when evening closes
Steals beneath the hawthorn trees,
Mingled mignonette and roses,
And delightful memories,
'Till the years slip off their pain,
And the heart grows young again.

Novelty becomes a passion

To this curious age of ours,

Trick your plants to suit the fashion,

But don't talk to me of flowers!

Time, if you so fast must move,

Spare the Garden that I love!

Christian Burke.

SOME MORE CAT FRIENDS.

By MAXWELL GRAY.



mortal cat ever deserved the meed of some melodious tear, it was Mr. Muff, a small, very dark, and handsome puss, with the alderman's chain on his breast, the well-marked M on his brow, and the black velvet inside his paws that bespeak, the well-bred, short-haired tabby, of

respectable, though plebeian, origin. intellect was not of the first order, but his heart was without a peer. Absolute unselfishness, purest altruism, was the key to which this guileless cat's character was set, and from which it never varied. Loyalty and generous trust in the merits of others adorned his nature: his gaze was benignant, his wink genial. Once, and once only, was he moved to anger, and then by the encroachments of a neighbouring kitten, left lonely by the holiday absence of the family he owned. The extreme impertinence of this cat in not only invading Mr. Muff's demesne, but also resembling him so closely as to be mistaken for Muff's own august self, was exasperating enough, but, when the pretender coolly seated himself by Mr. Muff's side, in his own attitude, on his own garden wall, shamelessly dividing the caresses of the assembled family with our dear little friend, it was too much. With a look of extreme bewilderment. as if deceived as to his own identity, or mistaking himself for the intruder, Mr. Muff turned to the nameless cat and swore softly, thus evincing a capacity for righteous wrath necessary to a well-balanced mind, and the salt of an otherwise too mild disposition.

Too early did Muff leave the shelter of the maternal basket for the wide world, at an age when an ordinary tumbler or breakfast-cup

might easily have contained all that was mortal of him. The household that he cheered by his tiny presence had become absolutely catless, but it included a dog of reserved manners, and few friendships, one Bob, a white fox-terrier of pure blood, for whom Mr. Muff at once conceived a sudden and lasting affection. The haughty and reticent Bob, early taught to regard the feline race with proper respect, was sadly embarrassed by the small cat's demonstrations of affection. He affected to ignore Mr. Muff's advances, and, when approached by him, would rise and feign to appear interested in scenery, his face betraying deep anxiety, while sideglances from the corner of his eye evinced great apprehension and distrust of Mr. Muff. But even his hard heart was ultimately softened by the honest warmth of the little creature's affection; he succumbed to the singular charm of his character, and accorded him cordial friendship. Did Bob, lost in canine meditation and elevated upon his hindlegs, survey mankind seriously from the window, a miniature tiger stealing upon his rear would spring fiercely upon the absurd pretence of a tail that some wretch had with stupid cruelty docked in his puppyhood, and then rush in pretended panic away and return to the charge, until Bob's reserve melted and mad merriment arose. But the play was rough, and Muffie shrieked with excitement and anguish to such an extent that higher powers interfered; when there was brief respite, until at Mr. Muff's instance, the riot began over again and again. We all draw the line somewhere; Mr. Muff drew it at his tail, which for some mysterious, but no doubt excellent, reason was set apart, "occult, withheld."

Bob might gallop round the garden with Mr. Muff, a crumpled ball of fur, dangling from his mouth, held high and occasionally shaken, as Bob was used to shake a rat, except that a rat needed but one such shake and—"nothing more," like Iphigenia in the original edition of

"The Dream of Fair Women." But when he tried to drag Muffie up the five stone steps leading to the garden by his tail, it was too much even for the long-suffering of this genial and gentle cat. Dearly as Muffie loved and much as he indulged kittens, they might not toy with that sacred tail. He would lie on his back, his paws in the air, and allow his young friends to maltreat him at pleasure, to bite, worry, and jump upon him, but not to touch that august tail. Even his mistress was taught to respect it. Yet was the tail on which Mr. Muff set such store of no remarkable elegance or distinction; to the vulgar eye it even appeared commonplace, an ordinary tail such as adorns the rear of many a brindled cat. The secret of its sanctity was Mr. Muff's; he never divulged it.

Though the large heart animating this small striped breast embraced the whole of man, dog, and cat, nay, even mousekind, yet, unlike human lovers of their species, whose affections are powerful in the abstract, but who cordially detest their fellow-creature in the concrete, loving their neighbour in general to the extent of large annual subscriptions towards the improvement of his morals, and suppression of his pleasant vices, and disliking their neighbour in particular, that is, next door, to the extent of throwing their own snails into his back garden, and monopolising The Times, and the cosiest easychair at their club, this guileless cat loved his fellow-creature as well in the concrete as in the abstract. His brief existence was coloured by the romance of four grand friendships-for his mistress, for Bob, the white foxterrier, for Frederick, the serving man, who loved Muffie much, and taught him to jump over his hands, and last, but certainly not least, for Lady Williamina. For her he entertained an admiration that was almost worship, asking no return, content to gaze with rapture upon her singular beauty, to see her preferred before him, to rejoice in her joys.

Who, then, was Lady Williamina? Bitter, bitter past, which, unless the gods love us enough to let us die young, claims all our friends, and sometimes our innocent, our gay and brilliant, our careless-happy selves, before the meridian of our years! She was a dame of lofty lineage, and patrician mien, yet gentle and sweet

as she was lovely and graceful. One weakness, the one redeeming vice that rescues too much virtue from the reproach of priggishness, preserved the picturesque of Lady Meenie's otherwise too symmetrical character, namely, an incurable passion for chickens. Condemned to death for several fowl murders, her sentence was commuted to one of perpetual banishment from her native hearth, at the instance of the present writer, who conveyed her, imprisoned in a basket under the carriage seat, and plaintively protesting against the indignity, some seven miles over hill and dale, to a home where, free from temptation, and surrounded by affection, she passed the remainder of her brief and beautiful existence in peace and innocence. Tall and slender, and splendidly robed in flowing Persian fur, her ladyship's lightest movement was grace, while her face usually expressed the most winning sweetness, and frequently wore an air of cynical toleration of human inferiority.

Her large dark eyes, the pupils of which, oval in brightest light, usually round, and never narrowed to the transverse line characteristic of the feline race, were set off by such darkened rims of Nature's contriving as art vainly emulates in human beauties; they measured in their "cold, calm, beautiful regard," with contemptuous accuracy, the moral and mental stature of that human being on whom they somewhat carelessly rested. Though so young and gentle-her months were twelve-she was somewhat blasee; she seemed to know the world, and appraise it at its due worth, or, rather, worthlessness; she was not lebens-lustig, lifejoyous, in the expressive German phrase, and, though capable of philosophic research, scarcely deemed it worth while. And, though she was profoundly convinced of the nothingness of all things, the conviction bred no bitterness in her, nor was she by any means sad or dull. The gayest and most amusing of companions, capable of dainty jest and arch innuendo, she not only contributed to the enjoyment of those around her, but conscientiously availed herself of every opportunity of personal enjoyment-particularly when fish appeared at table, and the public eye was absent. Hers was a wise and graceful philosophy; she sat lightly to the joys of life, held

herself above and aloof from them, but did not scorn to use them in their proper places. She was at least twice the size of the full-grown Muff, her patrician grace, her feminine charm, and her complex character and subtle intellect contrasting finely with his homely simplicity, bluff masculinity, and plebeian straightforwardness. His dark colour, with black bars, also set off her snowy whiteness of face and limb. She was not all white, but so marked that a regal mantle of lavender velvet, with sweeping train or plumy tail of the same hue, seemed to have been cast upon her shoulders. Her mane and dainty feathered ears were also layender blue, which colour, accurately parted on her forehead, after the manner of a Raphael Madonna's hair, enhanced the gentleness of her very pretty face, with its large dark eyes and coral pink lips. In short :-

"The Lady Meenie was tall and slim, The Lady Meenie was fair; And Sir Muffie, her slave, was stout of limb, And she was uncommonly fond of him, And they were a loving pair."

Honest little Muff was but six months old, and had reigned in undivided supremacy over all hearts for five of them, when first his kind, green eyes saw Lady Meenie, and he straightway resolved to honour and renown her. He first saw her enthroned upon his own sofa. caressed by his own mistress, but not one tinge of jealousy stained the purity of his guileless nature. Her ladyship swore somewhat roundly at his appearance; but, keeping prudently out of reach of her powerful paws, he uttered little cries of rapture and admiration, recognising at once with the good breeding that, plebeian though he was, distinguished him, his position as host to the lovely stranger lady, and it was not long before her ladyship, from a goodhumoured toleration of him, accorded him a cordial though patronising friendship, took care of him, boxed his ears now and then just to let him know his place, and made him mind her kittens when they bored her. Mr. Muff's devotion must have been a trial to her good breeding and self-restraint; he was her shadow. To call her ladyship was to ensure the presence of Mr. Muff; did she sun herself in the garden, her small adorer was sure to be seated at a respectful distance. Did she rise and walk away, a black and grey cat followed her. Was she seated in her low chair before the fire, the faithful Muff always coiled at her feet on the rug, whence he occasionally rose, and, standing on his hind legs, gently licked her face and lay down again. At times her ladyship was pleased to unbend and frolic gracefully, even racing and playing hide and seek with him; then, indeed was Mr. Muff a happy cat.

One thing saddened and perplexed his loyal and affectionate heart, the civil hostility with which his two aristocratic friends, Bob and Lady Meenie, chose to regard each other; many were the innocent stratagems by which he vainly strove to entangle the two in amicable sport with himself, and great was the pained amazement with which he would regard them absolutely refusing to meet and agreeing to ignore each other with a well-bred insolence that confounded his honest plebeian soul. One always felt the deep pain with which the world's envyings, and strifes, and meannesses afflicted this loving breast.

Yet Mr. Muff was in some respects of an aspiring nature. He loved to climb upwards, but could not perhaps because Bob's rough treatment in early kittenhood had made him slightly hump-backed -descend. Thus it was a frequent incident, the garden being surrounded by high buildings and containing tall trees, for the male portion of the household, consisting of the aforesaid Frederick, and a boy of all work, to be absent on the house-roofs or trees in search of the missing Muff, whose melancholy mews guided them to his rescue. But there came a mournful day when Mr. Muff returned no more, and Lady Williamina and Bob were desolate in a common sorrow, that they still haughtily refused to share outwardly.

Too proud to be vain, Lady Meenie was still conscious of her surpassing beauty; she frequently stood on her hind legs in a chair, her forepaws on a dressing-table, and gravely contemplated her image in the mirror for ten minutes at a time, appraising and enjoying her charms. She was quite a Society cat; she received guests with a graceful cordiality that, while putting them perfectly at their ease, never degenerated into familiarity. Her manner was

to rise on the entrance of a visitor, and quietly waiting till human salutations had been exchanged, to walk up to the seated guest, and placing her forepaws upon his or her knees, allow herself, with gentle purrs and sweet glances, to be stroked, after which she would return sedately to her place, except in the case of intimate friends, in whose lap she would sometimes graciously repose. When entering, as she never failed to do, a room full of company, she slowly made the tour, according to each guest the proper amount of notice, and only then entering into conversation with intimate friends.

Nor must it be supposed that Mr. Muff, though less polished than Lady Meenie, as befitted his humble rank, was ignorant of good manners. He was, on the contrary, a very prince of courtesy, and expected it of others. He held it discourteous of his mistress, while breakfasting with him, to peruse *The Times*, instead of enjoying his conversation, and when, absorbed in European politics or the latest murder, she forgot herself so far as to suffer the paper to exclude Mr. Muff from her sight, a small grey paw, gently removing the obstacle, filled her with contrition, and two affectionate green eyes, thus revealed, rebuked her.

For two summers and a winter had Mr. Muff gladdened the family circle, when his aspiring nature removed his gentle and joyous presence; nor did Lady Meenie's wit and beauty delight her friends for a longer period. Like many a gentle lady, it befell her, in her second summer, to give birth to a handsome but very wicked son, who, in a few weeks, grew so strong and rebellious as to master her, and thrash her unmercifully out of pure devilry. Pinkie was quite devoid of conscience; he cared

for nobody, and could do anything. Banished for his undutiful conduct to a family containing a parrot, he solaced himself by sitting on the cage out of reach, and making sudden and stealthy clutches at poor Poll beneath. Nemesis overtook him one day, when, sitting on the cage meditating fresh devilries, he forgot to tuck up his tail, whereupon the parrot seized the opportunity—and the tail.

Whether from Pinkie's maltreatment or some obscure disease, Lady Meenie thenceforth pined and dwined, and could not be healed. Always deeply attached to her mistress, and ever running to her to remove bones stuck in her mouth. and soothe her in pain and grief, she now clung to her more and more. One beautiful August morning as soon as the maids were up, her ladyship asked them for something, which, after many wrong guesses, they found was to be carried upstairs. There, her mistress was awakened by the touch of a soft paw on her cheek, to see mute prayer in Lady Meenie's large pathetic eyes, and passed an hour or two in stroking her. Her poor ladyship was past purring, but could still wink lovingly; breakfast came: she took none, but still asked to be stroked and talked to. At last she staggered off the bed and dragged herself slowly downstairs and out into the summer-house, where she lay down for the last time, and panted till she panted her gentle little ghost away for ever.

"She was such a *dear* cat," was the observation of an acquaintance of Lady Williamina's on hearing the mournful tidings a few days later.

Her mistress, remembering the love and wistfulness in Lady Meenie's large deep eyes on that far-off morning, wonders if anything could be more touching than this last dying farewell of a dumb friend.





By MRS. PARR.

CHAPTER VII.

EVER had the Duchess of Torbolton been thrown into greater perplexity than that she experienced on receipt of her son's letter. The time had come for which she had so long waited, and prayed, and she seemed as completely unprepared as she had been the first day. A hundred schemes which she and Sarah had devised floated in her mind, but not one seemed capable now of being put into practice. Her object was to arrange a meeting at some place where her son, ignorant of his wife's appearance, might be struck by it, and be betrayed into admiration of her beauty. But how was this to be effected? Not a rout, not a drum, but he was sure to hear her name proclaimed ere an hour had gone by, added to which it would not be wise to show himself at any house before he had paid his respects at Court. Easy and goodnatured as the king was, he was known to have taken umbrage at any want of immediate courtesy in those towards whom he had consented to be gracious. Poor lady! she was sadly troubled how to act; the entire hopes of her life seemed to be centred in the desire to hear her son confess his content in the bride who had been thrust upon him, and in her anxiety she overrated the effect to be produced by a happy accident. She had ordered her chair that she might go to Downham House and consult Lady Sarah, when a note was brought which at once decided her. It came from Sarah, and was to say that Lord Peterborough had just arrived from Bevis Mount to find that Miss Robinson was to sing at a concert at Chelsea. Therefore, knowing Lady Sarah's desire to hear her

sing he had come himself with a ticket for her. Prior to the concert she was to dine with her father at Lady Townshend's. These engagements would prevent her seeing her dear duchess on that day, but on the morrow would her grace remember that they were engaged to each other to see Mrs. Bracegirdle in "The Mourning Bride?"

Now, if good fortune would but send Rosemont back, here was the opportunity of all others to bring the two acquainted. Lady Sarah never looked better than when sitting at the play, and if but a certain box could be obtained which gave command of the one she would occupy, all might go well. Away went the Duchess to try and secure from Mr. Timson the seats she desired, and after the proper amount of declarations on that good person's part (declarations in which he never failed to indulge, that the box had just been let, but he would see what could be done; nothing would be left unturned on his part to oblige her grace), he put an end to the Duchess's anxiety, and no bounds to her gratitude, by informing her the matter had been settled, and that for the evening the box belonged to her. Pleased at her step being successful, she returned home to find her son seated by his father's side, and her presence only needed to complete their happiness. enter into an account of all they had to hear and to tell would be impossible. Lord Rosemont declared his mother looked younger than when he went away; while she, pointing to his bronzed face and thick-grown moustache, asked what was left of the boy who had gone from her. hours passed so swiftly that when his valet came the Duke stoutly denied it was his usual time for

retiring to rest, and nothing but the fear that any breaking through Sir Hans' orders might be attended with risk, made him finally yield to persuasion and leave his wife and son to enter into still more confidential gossip. There was but one topic they avoided, and this was any allusion to the event which had at first driven Lord Rosemont from home. This reticence on the Duchess's part arose from the plan she had formed—on Lord Rosemont's from detestation of speaking to his mother of a matter which, hide it as they would, he felt must lie heavy on both their hearts.

Very diplomatically did the Duchess work round to the fulfilment of her scheme. "Although," said she, "'twould be unwise to attend any rout or assembly before you have paid your duty at Court, still, I think, to be seen in public would do no harm. I like not that the world should say you were in doubt as to your reception, and this it might do if you were not seen until you've aired your loyalty."

Lord Rosemont smiled, as if attaching but small importance to this suggestion.

"As you will," he said; "only remember the fashion of my suits are somewhat out of date, and will not bear too broad a light cast on them."

"Just so. How would going to the play accord with your taste? A goodly company are sure to assemble to-morrow evening to see your old favourite, Mrs. Bracegirdle, who consents to act for one night in one of Mr. Congreve's plays."

"'Twould suit me excellently well," said Lord Rosemont, relieved to find that nothing more was expected of him. "I have lost none of my taste for play-going, although but few chances have fallen to my lot of late."

"Well, then, the thing is so far decided. Fortunately, I have secured a box, for Bracegirdle, so says the world, has grown more fascinating since her retirement. I hear that the king has bespoke the play, although there is no thought of his being there; indeed, 'tis scarce to be expected, seeing he cannot understand the half of what he sees, and nothing of what he hears."

Lord Rosemont laughed. "Without being disloyal, I may venture to say that his Majesty's absence will not affect my enjoyment."

His mother made an expressive movement of her face.

"You will scarce tolerate the father," she said,

dropping her voice, "and the son is but little, if any, better. But you will like the Princess of Wales. A little bird whispers that, when her husband sits on the throne, she will be king."

"Ah, well, mother, 'twill be my endeavour to steer clear of politics. I think we have suffered enough for one generation, and may be well disposed towards retirement."

The Duchess made no answer. With plenty of ambition for her son, she had no wish to see him sink into insignificance; and, added to Lord Downham's interest, she numbered among her powerful friends Sir Robert Walpole, whose gratitude had been secured by kindnesses shown to his sister Dolly, at a time when London was shaking its head over her indiscreet folly. However, no advantage was to be gained now by entering into an argument in favour of her plans, so she put an end to the conversation by telling her son that she saw he was tired, and therefore she should not permit her curiosity to detain him longer from getting the rest he stood in need of. After a few minutes she bade him farewell, and they separated.

The next morning Lord Rosemont found plenty to do in seeing the different tradespeople summoned by the Duke's valet to replenish his young master's wardrobe. Neither he nor his mother had opportunity for private conversation, although the Duchess, seizing on a moment when she knew there could be little questioning, said:

"Lord Downham and his daughter are in town."

"Are they?"

"Of course, you will go and see them?"

"Oh! there is plenty of time for that," and before more could be said the interruption, as foreseen by the Duchess, took place, and the subject was not renewed. The Duke joined them at dinner, after which the Duchess first informed her son that she had an engagement for that evening to Lady Grantham, but as it was only necessary for her to show herself, she would leave him at the theatre door, go on to Albemarle Street, and rejoin him in not longer than an hour's time. "During which you will find occupation in making a survey of the house, and noting such as you wish to ask me questions about." To this arrangement Lord Rosemont readily assented, and, thus agreed, the mother and son separated until the

summons was brought to them that the coach stood waiting.

And now it is fully time we returned to our heroine, whom we shall find (totally ignorant of the surprise which awaited her) seated in her room taking her ease in the most becoming of dimity negligées, her dark hair all loose about her preparatory to the great business of dressing for the play. Close by, Cicely is setting out the different adornments needed by her mistress, who is vastly particular about everything she puts on, and well repays all the pains her clever waitingwoman bestows upon her. On the spindle-legged dressing-table are arranged the pomatums, crisping pins, rowels, and hair laces, which will be put in requisition to raise the flowing locks into the approved mountain; then come essences, powdered rose leaves, and jessamy butter; and, lastly, distilled water to sprinkle her with and make her smell "as sweet as Bucklersbury in simple time."

On a high-backed settee is spread out the blue brocaded train and canary petticoat, with rumple knots and a set of ribbons to match. The dress is a favourite one of her mistress's, and Cicely pulls out the bows and arranges the ruffles with more than ordinary care, at the same time letting her mind run on the alterations she will make, so that, although Madame Constable has borrowed the fashion of it, she will find that she is not a bit nearer looking like my lady.

"With a skin for all the world like a gilly flower," mutters Cicely, tossing her head at such presumption.

"Some one is tapping at the outer door, Cicely," says her mistress, and with a start which wakes her up to the fact, Cicely hurries to answer the summons, and a minute after returns with a note to be delivered into Lady Sarah's hands without delay. It is from the Duchess of Torbolton, and runs as follows:—

My Child,—He, for whose presence we have so long sighed, has arrived. According to your wish, and our agreement, I have spoken scarcely a word of you, and, I fancy, he rather avoids the subject. After casting about how best you should meet without his foreknowledge of your presence, I yesterday hit upon the following plan, which has so far gone well. I secured a box for Mr. Congreve's play, just opposite the one we together should have occupied, and to which, I trust, you

will now go, in company with our good friend, Mistress Harcourt. When there, contrive to attract his notice—'tis impossible that you escape it—so that when I join him—for I go first to my Lady Grantham's—I may hear from his lips those tributes all are fain to pay to my Sarah's charms."

The blood rushed so violently into poor Sarah's cheeks that she was forced to hide them with her hands; her heart beat so fast that she had to hold her breath to stop her sighs. At last! at last! Oh! how she had feared, hoped for, longed for, and dreaded this day; how she had striven, and studied, with one object always in view, and one hope ever before her; how she had praved that the love which uncared for and unsought she had given might be returned-and was this now coming to pass? Was her long suspense to end in joy or bitterness? her weary love-sick heart to be cherished, or scornfully despised? Men had said of her that she was prudish, cold, capricious. Women had sneered, saying she set too much value on her dark eyes and creamy skin-which, try as they might, Iris powder would not give them -were these things true? In all honesty, no-a thousand times no.

Sarah's character had developed, not changed; its tenderness and simplicity had but been strengthened by the good training of Mistress Harcourt and the loving sympathy of the Duchess. In the midst of the gay frivolities of a Court, seeing herself as much sought after and admired as she had been formerly neglected, Sarah remained at heart as innocent as a child; and the blushes that rose at the outspoken flattery of the day were the heralds of her love, not her vanity. Fortunately for her relatives, Sarah was blessed with a happy forgetfulness of injuries, so that when her sisters ceased to remember the flouts and twittings they had bestowed upon her, they died out of Sarah's memory; and when Lord Downham grew to believe his repeated assertion that she had always been his favourite child, Sarah tried to believe it as well. There was but one bitter memory that, instead of dying, grew stronger with each year, and that was the recollection that she had been put beyond the hope of gaining that love which she most coveted; that, instead of boasting she was his chosen one, she had to endure the humiliating shame of having been thrust upon a husband whose hard necessities had compelled him to accept her.

How was it possible that he should ever love her? ever think kindly of her? and, shutting her eyes in these despairing moments, she would recall the look he cast upon her, the words he flung at her, until, filled with despair, she ran for consolation to her friend the mirror, and took heart and hope from the fair form she saw reflected.

The receipt of the news contained in her letter seemed to create a tumult of all these mingled hopes and fears. At length, roused by an extra shake that inquisitive Mrs. Cicely had given to the brocaded train, she exclaimed:

"Cicely, put all that aside; this evening I shall wear nothing that is not white—"

Cicely's face announced her amazement.

"And none of those pendants, bracelets, earrings—no ornaments but my string of pearls; and hasten, Cicely, hasten, for, my warrant 'pon it, but thou hast the dressing of the vainest madam 'twas ever thy poor luck to come across; and, Cicely, go first with all speed to Madame Harcourt and say to her, from me, that I crave the favour of her company at the play to-night; if she hesitates, tell her I will come myself to give a reason which will put to flight all her scruples."

Cicely returned to say that Madame Harcourt sent her acceptance of her ladyship's invitation; and as soon as her woman had finished her dressing she would come to her ladyship's room. Poor Cicely! In after years she always vowed that, had it not been for vexing her mistress, she would have cried that night in sheer despair of pleasing my lady, and making her contented with her looks; but, happily, just as she was on the point of giving way, Mistress Harcourt came into the room exclaiming: "Hey day! 'tis never a birthday night that thou'rt dressed in such bravery? Why, Cicely, thou hast out-handed thyself. I never saw thy lady look so comely."

And at these words her lady sprang from her seat, threw her arms round her dear friend, and, hanging on her neck, whispered the news which had caused this tumult of emotion. Between laughing and crying she begged her repeat her flattering speech again, so that she might take heart at her words. And, hearing this, Mrs. Harcourt led her to her mirror, bidding her rather take heart from that which she saw there reflected; and at sight of her fair self she broke into a merry laugh, saying, "Thanks to my good Cicely, no one can call me a dowdy now."

CHAPTER VIII.

ABOUT the same time that this little scene was being acted, and just as Lady Sarah had finished her laborious toilette, the object of all these pains arrived in Drury Lane, and was set down in front of the theatre. Already the house was fast filling, for, "by the desire of several ladies of quality," Booth was to play "Osmyn" to Mrs. Bracegirdle's "Almeria," and the two being town favourites were sure—when seen together—to draw a goodly company. Lord Rosemont was soon conducted to his box, seated, and looking round him with all the interest of a novice. Indeed, so long a time had elapsed since he had seen anything like a fashionable assembly that the scene appeared new and fresh to him, and gazing at the gaily-dressed multitude, he fancied he had never seen so much beauty before; decidedly, thought he, "the women are grown more handsome. Why, I see at least a score whose names I shall want my mother to declare to me." It appeared incredible that he should find himself so completely a stranger, for among all present there were but two or three familiar faces; Colonel Churchill was one, Lord Chesterfield another, and there, just entering, he recognised his mother's old favourite, Lord John Hervey. Following this latter gentleman's progress, he saw him enter a box and contrive to seat himself near a very beautiful girl, whose smiling face bespoke the pleasure his presence gave her. Interested in these two persons, Lord Rosemont sat watching the covertly carried on flirtation, until his quick imagination had woven quite a little romance. Suddenly he started; a painful memory dashed away the charm, and he leaned back with an impatient sigh. What had he to do with thoughts of love? His fate was to bear about a burden which grew more distasteful to him every day. While he had been absent from all temptation he had not felt the full force of his misery, but now the thought of his unknown wife seemed hateful to him, the more so because his mother had said he would find her prepared to bestow upon him that affection which was a part of her amiable nature. Shuddering, he inwardly exclaimed: "Never! come what may, I cannot simulate what I shall never feel. It may not be. It was not her fault that brought about this miserable union, but as we must both suffer for the sins of others, let us suffer

apart, and avoid all show of a love that it is impossible to feel."

The sharp drawing back of the curtains in a box near him, occasioned a sudden disturbance to his reverie, and made him look in that direction. The occupants were two ladies, one he could see perfeetly, but the other so held her fan that it was impossible to catch a glimpse of her face. She was evidently young and richly dressed, and above her fan her unpowdered hair showed dark and glossy. But stay, the bell rings, the curtain lifts and discloses the irresistible Bracegirdle, whose presence is greeted by a burst of applause so loud and long that some minutes elapse before the play is allowed to proceed, and when it does, so engrossed is Lord Rosemont in its mimic woes that his opposite neighbour has full opportunity for indulging her curiosity, and comparing the original with the portrait lying as usual close to her beating

This Sarah takes as her standard of comparison, because, beyond the leading events of her inauspicious marriage morn, her memory will not serve her, and had it not been for this picture, her husband's face would be as strange to her as hers is to him. Husband and wife, and still strangers! Her eyes brim up with tears, as, sighing, her heart seems to say to his: "What tragedy is so mournful as our own?" A sudden something impelled Lord Rosemont to turn and meet the tearful, earnest gaze fixed upon him. The lady hastily averted her head, though not so quickly but that he had time to take in the pensive sadness of the sweet young face.

"There sits Almeria," he thought. "interpreted a thousand times better than 'tis possible to be by Bracegirdle's brunette beauty." He ventured another glance, but the fair one had placed that odious fan in the way. Perhaps if he were to seem again engrossed with the play she might look his way. So, turning his head towards the stage, he directed his eyes in a manner by which he could give an occasional glance to see whether, thinking herself no longer observed, the fan would be removed. Not yet—no—a longer pause—yes, it is down, and once more its fair owner's interest seems riveted upon himself.

Lord Rosemont's cheeks tingle; the desire to turn is irresistible; he cannot resist longer, and this time, though their eyes meet, the lady only slowly drops hers, and sits engrossed with the vinaigrette she carries attached to her jewelled fan-stick.

"Who can she be?" and forgetting all but the presence of this unknown fair, so long as she continues occupied Lord Rosemont continues to gaze at her. Of a certainty, Lady Sarah's looks are set off to the best advantage, and never has she been seen more attractive than she is to-night. The mode she adopts of dressing her hair sets off her small oval face to great advantage. The rows of curls raised from the forehead to the top of the head are each divided with a string of pearls, in the midst of which sparkles a diamond Sevigné. From the back of the head large curls fall over the neck and shoulders, peeping out of which pearls show as if dropped by accident. Her bodice of satin-brocade is embroidered with silver lace, her neck and arms are daintily veiled with Spanish point. All her surroundings give evidence that she is a lady of exalted rank, and Lord Rosemont begins to grow impatient for his mother's return.

Again the curtain rises, but the scene fails to attract the young man, so interested has he become in all the movements of his opposite neighbour; the more completely so because he cannot fail to observe that he is in some way an attraction for the lady herself, for she entirely disregards the working of the play, and in a quiet, unobtrusive way that shrinks from, rather than courts notice, she centres all her attention on him; sometimes she casts a furtive glance across; sometimes she retires to the back of the box, or sheltered behind its curtain, she indulges in a fixed earnest gaze.

Several times their eyes have met, and seemingly in answer to the look of entreaty the young man has given her, she has not withdrawn hers so suddenly, neither has she averted her face, but let her mantling blushes come and die away before his ardent looks.

Engrossed by one object, Lord Rosemont sat utterly oblivious of the play, the actors, or the audience, and in excuse of this it must be remembered that he had been so long absent from society that he was become a stranger to its restraints and requirements: he only knew that a mysterious interest seemed to have suddenly sprung up between him and the most beautiful woman he had ever seen.

How he longed to speak to her, to listen to the low, sweet voice he felt certain would come forth

from those curved, drooping lips, which gave such a tender expression to her lovely face. His senses seemed in that tumultuous state when the wildest hopes and fears chase through the brain; he envied everything near her, he hated everyone who could speak to her; he felt furiously jealous when a footman handed a note to her, and had an insatiable curiosity to know who it was from, and what it said; in a word, a sudden torrent seemed to have swept away reason and prudence, and left nothing but an uncontrollable passion.

Two or three times his former good resolves struggled to obtain their hold upon his conscience. a cold sweat broke over him, and a pained expression came into his face, which appeared to find a sympathetic chord in his charmer's heart; for she throws at him such a look of wistful, tender pity that straightway puts to flight every recollection of his dowdy bride, and he vows that come what may, he will not let her leave without an assurance of her name and of where they may meet again. Something to this effect he scribbles down on a slip of paper, hoping that an opportunity to deliver it will be given him by his mother's introduction-for of a certainty the Duchess will know her, he has but little doubt on that score, and with this hope in view, he sits until the happy moment shall arrive.

The third act had already commenced when the box door was opened and the Duchess entered. Her son rose to greet her, placed her chair, and when she was seated was about to resume his own, when to his consternation he caught sight of the two ladies opposite just leaving their box. What was to be done? how should he stop them? Good heavens! if he lost sight of them he was undone!

"Will your ladyship pardon my absence?" he exclaimed, starting up, "only for a few moments."

"And why?" asked the Duchess, smiling, as she playfully laid a detaining hand upon his arm.

"I see, or at least I fancy so, a friend I wish to speak to; I crave your permission, Madam. I will explain."

Already he was in the lobby hurrying towards the staircase down which he knew the two ladies must make their exit.

Lady Sarah was the first to catch sight of their pursuer.

"Hasten, dear friend, hasten," she cried, "or he will hear thee calling for my chair."

"Rest easy," whispered Mrs. Harcourt, "Diggory has his orders to give no name but mine; draw the hood well over thy face, so that no idler standing by recognises us."

By this time Lord Rosemont was by their side; he made a movement to Lady Sarah as if imploring permission to address her, and then, hardly knowing what he did, thrust into her hand the slip of paper. Upon this Lady Sarah declared that she just did the first thing that came into her mind, which was to regard for a moment the outside of the billet, and then, without reading it, drop it among the dainty folds of lace which covered her stomacher. Falling a step or two behind Mrs. Harcourt, she laid her finger on her lip as if to intimate that she wished to preserve secrecy, and with a hurried glance round her, she whispered, "I pray you, sir, do not follow us nor seek to inquire of any concerning us."

"Nay, Madam, give me at least the poor satisfaction of knowing the name of her whose captive I have irresistibly become."

She half put out her hand, saying, as she shyly lifted her eyes to his, "If I could believe that what you say is true——"

"Madam, I swear that never until now did I know the witchery your sex possess. Nay, hasten not, listen for one instant, or at least tell me how we may meet again, so that I have some gleam of hope to rest on."

They had reached the foot of the stairs; a turn would bring them in view of the steps leading to the door, so pausing, she said:

"I may trust you?"

"With more than life."

"Will you give me a promise?"

"My honour is forfeited if I grant not whatever you ask."

"Then I ask this, that to-night you neither follow me nor seek to find from those around who I am. Do this, and, though I name neither time nor place, to-morrow, Lord Rosemont, my word is pledged that we meet again."

"Lord Rosemont!" he exclaimed in surprise; "Then you know who I am?" but without another word, drawing her hood over her face, she hurried on, joined Mrs. Harcourt, and by the time Lord Rosemont could reach the steps the two chairs were already being borne away.

(To be continued.)



WESTFIELD COLLEGE.

By C. S. MAYNARD.

HE rising tide of habitations has swept round the western base of Hampstead Hill, and a new suburb has sprung up within the last few years that will soon link the villages of Child's Hill and Hendon to the heart of London. But the Heath remains untouched, and, except on Sundays and Bank Holidays, when it becomes the playground of some thousands, it is a place where solitude and rest may always be found. Old traditions and associations linger in every part of Hampstead: one readily recalls there the days of Samuel Richardson and Dr. Johnson, or of Miss Joanna Baillie and her literary friends. But the new world has boldly asserted itself among those haunted fields. From the beautiful old lane that joins Oak Hill and the Heath with the Finchlev Road, a long red-brick building on the rising ground to the right attracts the notice of the wayfarer, and excites his curiosity. A well-informed man has been heard to pronounce it "a 'ospital," but the better-informed are aware that it is a College for Women. Sixty years or so ago, an AngloIndian family bought the estate on which it stands, and built there a solid mansion in the style which, by reason of pillars and pediments, was supposed to be Classical. The original still stands in its massive ugliness, but the Council of Westfield College have added a really beautiful wing, which is well worthy of its commanding position.

The College was founded in 1882 by Miss Dudin Brown, and for some years it occupied at first two, and afterwards four houses in Maresfield Gardens. Students of those days recount with pride the hardships cheerfully endured when an epidemic of colds reigned in the house which was furthest from the College kitchen, and a long procession of breakfasts might be encountered on a rainy morning, being conveyed under umbrellas through the garden to the invalids. Students of the present day enjoy much greater luxury, for, though it is quite two minutes' quick walk from one end of the building to the other, all the inhabitants are under one roof.

The Mistress, Miss Constance Maynard, was a student of Girton in the days when Girton did not number ten students all told. Two of the Resident Lecturers came from Newnham, and two are old students of Westfield College, holding London degrees. The internal arrangements are, therefore, largely modelled on those of the Cambridge Colleges. Students have two rooms each, and are practically unfettered with regard to the disposal of their time, as no rules exist but those which are necessary for the comfort of so large a household. As so much liberty is granted, it follows that no student is admitted under eighteen.

The Council consists of a number of ladies and gentlemen who are warmly interested in education, and who have generously devoted much time, thought, and energy to fostering the growth and development of the College. One member has not only given largely to the general funds and in the form of scholarships, but has enlarged the grounds by granting the use of a shady orchard, which she rescued from the ever-encroaching builder. Another member visited the building every day for some months in order to see that the drying of the new walls was properly carried out; and others have given special attention to the garden, the library, and the many other requirements of the nascent institution. Among the Vice-Presidents are the Bishops of London, Exeter. and Wakefield, and the Chairman of the Council is Canon Fleming.

The Alma Mater of Westfield students is the University of London, and in two important respects this causes the College to differ from the Cambridge and Oxford Colleges for Women.

In the first place the examination system of London is unlike that of the older Universities. The Pass Degree of Cambridge, for example, is so very easy of attainment that, when examinations were formally thrown open to women, only the Triposes, or Honours Examinations, were asked for. The Pass Degree of London is a much more serious matter, and, though a considerable proportion of Westfield students have taken honours, the majority do not specialise. Again, the degrees of London are open to women on the same conditions as to men:

women graduates have a right to vote in convocation, and thus to take part in the government of the University. On the other hand, a London college comes in for none of that ancient inheritance which Girton and Newnham, Somerville and Lady Margaret share. But it is not altogether disadvantageous to be obliged to construct one's own precedents.

The most important feature in College life is, no doubt, the work, although play receives a fair share of attention. A legend exists that an old lady who was being "shown round" by a student, once asked: "What time have you for work, my dear?" When the student replied, "From six to eight hours," the old lady exclaimed, with surprise: "Then, when do you study?" Work, in the old lady's sense of the word, is generally reduced to the minimum of mending which is absolutely necessary, but students who are reading for Matriculation work about eight hours a day: those who are reading for the higher examinations do not require so much time, for the number of subjects is very much reduced, especially in the Final year. The Matriculation examination is troublesome by reason of its many and diverse subjects. and it is hoped that before long students will be compelled to pass it before entrance, if they intend to read for a degree. To an unmathematical mind, it is a trying ordeal to grasp the subject of Dynamics; and to those who delight in Classics or Philosophy there is seldom much regret when a decent amount of Chemistry has satisfied the examiners. On the other hand, Science students are inclined to feel rebellious when they are obliged to spend over Cicero's Old Age or Cæsar's painfully incorrect description of Britain the precious hours which would fly so swiftly over the microscope. "Latin was like a bad dream," said one of these devotees of Science, who is now, for the first time, recklessly happy in her laboratory pursuits. The Bachelor of Science degree is regarded with much respect by the initiated, all over the world, and Westfield has sent forth four graduates in the canary-coloured silk hoods, though the russet brown of the Arts degree is very much more popular.

A College day begins with prayers at eight o'clock, followed immediately by breakfast,

which is an informal meal. A newspaper is supplied for each of the six tables, but there is not time for more than a hasty glance at the news, for two or three lectures usually begin at nine. If there is no lecture, each student's study is by that time in order, so that she may settle down to work at once. Lectures are always over by one, when lunch is ready; and after lunch there are about two hours of active exercise. Tennis is the principal game, and there is generally some hard play to be seen on the asphalte courts, even on the coldest days. Matches are played each year with Girton and with Holloway, and occasionally with the London School of Medicine for Women. The hours of recreation are sometimes interrupted by a call to the Fire Brigade to assemble, when about a dozen members, under the command of a captain, go through a "bucket practice," or get out the canvas chute, down which every person belonging to the College must pass at some time or other from the upper windows to the ground below. Sometimes an officer of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade is present to give advice and directions; an alarming message goes down the corridors that a certain room is "well alight," and the pumps are concentrated on the spot. One disinterested and enthusiastic captain determined to give her brigade practice in entering a room full of smoke: for this purpose she kindled some green sticks in her fireplace, shut the register and the window, and went down to lunch, carefully closing the door behind her. By half-past one the room was in excellent condition for the experiment, but the ruling powers did not encourage its repetition.

Afternoon tea is ready in the Dining Hall at 3.30, and by a quarter to four silence reigns through the whole place until the gong sounds for dressing at a quarter past six. Dinner is the only meal at which all are expected to sit down together. Students take their places as they choose, except at the "high table," to which the mistress invites three or four each evening. For half an hour after dinner it is a point of honour not to work. A Shakespeare Reading is held on one evening; a concert in the Common Room on another; a "sharp practice" discussion comes off fortnightly, and furnishes oratorical ability for the debates, which are held twice a term. On these occasions

from fifty to sixty visitors are present, and the Dining Hall is used. The subjects chosen for debate cover a wide range: during last year the Eight Hours Bill was perhaps the most popular subject, for it was difficult at times for the President to determine which honourable member had caught her eye, so many rose at once to speak. The debate presents one of the most characteristic scenes in College life. The President sits on a daïs, and is supported on the right and left by the Vice-President, the Secretary, and the most distinguished guests. The value of an institution such as this can hardly be over-estimated, when it is remembered that for centuries women have received no training in the forming of judgments, or in the conduct of an argument; and that they are now rapidly entering upon spheres of life in which such training is absolutely necessary to success. If the President does not think an irrelevant speech quite flagrant enough for her interference, it cannot escape the criticism of some member on the other side, and as the House is always ready to see a joke, an unlucky speaker whose speech is open to ridicule laughs with the rest, and takes her opponent's satire with a good grace.

A true story is current of a young German lady who was desirous of entering College, but in a state of hesitation as to which subjects she would undertake, and who, on hearing the description of these debates, spontaneously assured Miss Maynard that she was quite willing to learn "Classics, or Religion, or anything, if only she might be taught public speaking!" And in truth, no student need leave the College without at any rate an elementary knowledge of this art.

Among the other recreations are the proceedings of a small Browning Society, which meets once a week. These Browning readings have assumed a somewhat novel character, for all discussion is postponed until a poem has been read several times, if necessary, and it is found that this is a quicker method of realising the poet's meaning than the common plan of hearing all that each member has got to say on the subject before fully considering the poem itself. A French reading takes place weekly, and the half-hour on one evening is devoted to dancing and on another to games in the Common Room.

Many purposes are served by this room. Prayers are read in it morning and evening; the newspapers are placed in it after breakfast each day, and during recreation hours the piano or organ is practised there, while after dinner it is the College drawing-room, and all students' meetings are held there.

The evening hours are kept sacred to work, but no one is expected to work after ten o'clock. There are, of course, no rules with regard to bed-time, but any noise heard after 10.30 is at once suppressed by a visit from the Justice of the Peace. There are three of these dignitaries, one on each corridor, and they are elected by the students themselves. Their office is to see that no one is disturbed during working hours or late at night, and they are liable to be summoned at any moment to carry out these func-A brilliant cocoa-party in full swing often comes to a sudden end on a visit from the I.P., and two friends desiring to converse over the fire are compelled to escape reprimand by speaking in the lowest possible tones.

The University Examinations of the year are the Matriculation, which takes place in June, the Intermediate, in July, and the B.A. and B.Sc., early in the Michaelmas Term. The Final Examinations naturally create most interest, as the Candidates have generally been three or four years in the College, and their withdrawal from ordinary life cannot be overlooked. Sympathising friends are always ready to attend them and to minister to their comfort in every way: the corridors are, if possible, more quiet in the evenings, and they are despatched each morning of the eventful week to meet their fate at Burlington House by a cheering group upon the steps. But the bright side of examinations comes into view on the second Wednesday in May, when degrees are conferred. It is difficult to gain admission to Burlington House on this occasion, as the theatre is not large enough to hold all who wish to be present, but graduates of former years can always find seats if they present themselves in cap and gown. The graduates of the day are shown to reserved places by the University officials, and are presented to the Chancellor by the Heads of their respective Colleges. Last May, the Mistress of Westfield had the pleasure of presenting among her students Miss Emily Simey, who had won the Gilchrist medal and prize, annually awarded to the woman who is placed highest in the B.A. examination, and Miss Hilda Wenham, who had won the Gilchrist scholarship for a corresponding place in the Matriculation.

"Capping Day," as this day is popularly called, is observed as Commemoration at Westfield. As many old students as can attend dine in Hall, and the new B.A.'s and B.Sc.'s sit on either side of the Mistress, wearing their hoods and gowns. Speeches are made, healths are drunk in College lemonade, and the College songs are sung with great animation. A new song is composed for each year, and others, such as the "Song of the Years," one verse of which is sung by the students of each stage in the College course, are recognised as institutions.

Any description of life at Westfield must be incomplete without reference to the design of the Founder and the Mistress. Miss Dudin Brown and Miss Maynard, both realising the importance of education for women, are also both profoundly impressed with the conviction that all education should be carried out upon a religious basis. Anything beyond a secular education is not in favour in these days, but Westfield has openly declared itself on the other side. As Miss Maynard has tersely put it: "We desire our College to be tested, not alone by the position our students take in intellectual matters, but by what they become in life and character, when once they are sent out into the great work-a-day world."

The Mistress gives a weekly Bible Lecture, at which all the students are present, and gives also more individual teaching to small groups of students, who thus learn to translate the meaning of the Bible into the language of daily life. Out of nearly a hundred students who have left the College, many are fully engaged in some important work, whether as principals of schools, teachers, missionaries, or nurses, and the rest are almost all doing such work as their home duties will permit. They go out into life feeling, not so much that happy College days are over, as that they have gained something of which no subsequent experience can rob them, and that the friendship begun with both Mistress and Staff is something real and permanent.

ATALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

Subject for August—"Should the Science of Mesmerism be considered beneficial or injurious to humanity?" Papers not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before August 25th. The best paper on either side will be published in the magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Describe a humorous scene wherein her relations are trying to console a young widow for her recent loss. Give an estimate of the character of Bella Wilfer in *Our Mutual Friend*, Write a *Rispetto* on *Mirth* (for form, see Christmas Number Prize Poem). Essays not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before August 25th.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (JULY).

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- 1. The "Folio of 1623." Set forth by his "friends" and "fellows," John Hemings and Henry Coudell.
 - 2. To the Earls of Pembroke and Montgomery.

П.

1. On Shakspere's grave at Stratford. 2. Attributed to Shakspere himself.

III.

1. Ben Jonson. 2. By Edmund Waller,

IV.

1. Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey. 2. Robert Herrick - The Mad Maiden's Song. 3. Thomas Carew.

V.

- 1. From Love Lies Bleeding, by Christina Rossetti.
- 2. Sybilla Palmifera, by Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

VI.

- 1. John Wilson, author of the Noctes Ambrosiana.
- 2. John Gibson Lockhart, author of Adam Blair.

SEARCH QUESTIONS (AUGUST).

3.

Ι.

- 1. Where do we get this quotation-
- "The Case is alter'd—you may then proceed; In such a cause the Plaintiff will be hiss'd, My Lords the Judges, laugh, and you're dismissed"?
- 2. And this-
 - "Not to admire, is all the art I know;
 To make men happy, and to keep them so"?

П,

- 1. Whence come these quotations-
 - "Ah, dearest, if there be A devil in man, there is an augel too, And if he did that wrong you charge him with, His augel broke his heart"?
- 2. "O silent father of our kings to be,
 Mourn'd in this golden hour of jubilee,
 For this, for all, we weep our thanks to thee!"?

111.

- 1. Who wrote the following quotations-
 - "Where the apple reddens Never pry— Lest we lose our Edens, Eve and I"?

. "Teach me, only teach, Love!
As I ought

I will speak thy speech, Love, Think thy thought"?
"Of the million or two, more or less,

I rule and possess,
One man, for some cause undefined,
Was least to my mind"?

to my mind " ?

IV.

- 1. Where do we find the original of Shakspere's play of Othello ?
 - 2. Where did he find the story for King Lear ?

V.

2. Give authors of following quotations-

"Go forth! for she is gone! With the golden light of her wavy hair, She is gone to the fields of the viewless air; She hath left her dwelling lone!"

2. "Fear! I'm a Greek, and how should I fear death? A slave, and wherefore should I dread my freedom?"

VI.

Finish the quotation-

"Are these the forests loved of old so well, Where ou May nights enchanted music was?" Give author.





L'AMOUR BRISANT SON ARC.

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CHAPTÉR XXXIII.

CANDOUR IN COURTSHIP.

SEATED at the window of the old parlour, in the fading light of an October afternoon, is Mary Errol. The slanting beams of sunshine fall upon her face, and she has dropped her sewing to watch the vanishing radiance.

It is the same good, honest face we saw first in the drawing-room of Donglas Castle; but there is a pensive sadness on it now it did not wear then. There are haunting shadows in the clear brown eyes, and the hazel tresses are streaked with grey. Sorrow has written its indelible record in lines upon the open brow, and in the curve of the lips one can read traces of a by-gone anguish. Yet another and rarer beauty dwells in that face—the beauty of a chastened soul.

Nearly three years have passed since the loss of him she had loved through all her life, and time, the great healer, has assuaged the cruel pangs with which her bosom was rent; but it has not brought forgetfulness: deep down in her heart there is a grave, where lies buried a part of herself, though concealed from all eyes but hers. To the outer world she is much the same as of yore, only kinder, more gentle and patient, and with an increasing wealth of sympathy whose source they but imperfectly divine; yet those who knew her best are conscious of a subtle change, which seems to connect her with another life than this. Not that she has ceased to manifest interest and pleasure in the things about her, or given herself up to dreamy abstraction; on the contrary, no one is more active

in deeds of practical benevolence, or more alive to the amenities of life than she; only, self seems to have little share in what she does: to make the joys and sorrows of others her own seems now her dominant aim.

Just now the sound of rapid footsteps on the gravelled path outside startles her from her reverie, and, ashamed of even this self-indulgence, she springs to her feet, to welcome the visitor, who proves to be a very handsome young lady.

Mrs. Errol, now a feeble old woman and almost blind, who has been dozing in her arm-chair by the fire, awakes at the sound, and inquires what time it is, thinking it is her son who has come home, and wondering how she has slept so long.

A flutter of robes and a clear silvery voice asking, "Where is Mary?" supply the right solution of the question; and next minute Jessy Douglas comes rushing in, breathless and excited.

"Oh! I've got such news!" were her first words.
"I only heard it from Harry an hour ago, and I came over to tell you without delay. I thought you might have heard, but I see you haven't, and I'm so delighted to be the first bearer of the tidings.
—Only think, Mary," she continued, "only think, Mrs. Errol! the smugglers have been caught. But that's the least of it: who do you think was the leader of the gang?"

Both Mary and her mother gazed with increasing curiosity on the animated countenance, all aglow with kindling vivacity, hardly knowing what to think of her message, but assured the sequel was fraught with no common interest to them, as they noticed the burning eagerness with which she spoke.

"Who was it?" at last inquired Mary.

"Prepare for a shock," replied Jessy: "it was no other than our noble friend and benefactor, Mr. Norman Lesly."

Mary gazed as if she had not heard aright. Mrs. Errol's features quivered, and, grasping the arm of her chair, she asked:

"Is that really true?"

"Perfectly true, Mrs. Errol," was the firm rejoinder. "At this moment he and his associates are in Lynnburgh gaol. They were taken there late last night. I'm surprised you have not heard of it; all the village is in a ferment about it."

"Ay, it's a' true," chimed in Betsy, who had been waiting for the right moment to announce herself. "I kent it this mornin', but I keepit a calm sough, for ye see I had something to dae wi't, an' it wasna for me to speak ower sune."

All now turned in astonishment to Betsy, hardly crediting their senses.

"What do you mean?" demanded Mary.

Thereupon the redoubtable housekeeper related her adventure a few nights ago at Raxley Castle, and the prompt measures she had taken to lodge her information with the authorities, who, acting upon it, had finally captured the contraband traders, and placed them in custody.

"Oh, Betsy! I wish it had been anyone but you," was Mary's remark, as she listened to the story.

"Indeed, Mary, I think she has done one of the most praiseworthy deeds she ever did," objected Jessy. "I only wish I could claim the distinction. Why, she has rid the neighbourhood of a consummate villain—a wretch who has——"

A deprecatory motion of Mrs. Errol's hand arrested the impetuous words she was about to utter.

"Dinna speak ony mair o' him," she said. "He ruined my puir laddie, and broke my heart; but his sin has found him out at last. May the Lord help him."

Trembling and agitated, she rose, and slowly left the room, followed by Betsy, whose anticipated triumph had signally failed.

The servant soon reappeared, however, to supply the necessary information on the subject of the seizure in Raxley Castle.

"Ye ken I telt them a' aboot it," she began to her two auditors; "an' they got a heap o' sodgers hidden doon amang the dungeons, whaur they keepit a' their ill-gotten gear; for, ye see, we heard them sayin', Dauvit Murray an' me, that they wad hae to get anither place for't; an' sae the magistrates kent what to dae. Weel, last nicht, the hale crew were at their wark, little thinkin' it was the last o't, when the sodgers yolkit on them, and had them a' in jile in ither twa 'oors, Laisley amang them, gude be thankit."

Jessy burst out a-laughing. "I'm proud of you, Betsy," said she. 'You're proving a veritable heroine in your old age. I only wish I had been with you that night, instead of David Murray. Yes, I do, Mary," she repeated, observing the mild remonstrance in her friend's expressive eyes: "it was no mean distinction to bring such a wretch as Lesly to justice. I wonder if they'll hang him."

"Oh, hush, Jessy," said Mary.

"Weel naebody e'er deserved it mair," persisted Betsy. "I'm suir he's been the ruin o' mony a ane forby——"

She interrupted herself; and at that moment the sharp click of the gate outside made her look out of the window, when, exclaiming: "Losh me! it's Maister Ronald, an' the tea's no ready!" she ran away to make up for lost time.

Mary was proceeding to light the lamp, when Jessy, in a very excited manner, cried: "Don't tell him I'm here!" And before she could recover from her astonishment, her eccentric guest had whisked herself out of sight behind the window-curtains.

Presently Ronald came into the room, saying, in a querulous tone: "Mary, why is tea not ready? I have a special engagement to-night in Lynnburgh, and can't afford to be late."

This engagement was with one of the authorities in that town, who wished to get some information from Mr. Errol touching the character of Mr. Lesly, aware that none was better able to furnish such. But it was one of Ronald's crotchets never to satisfy curiosity, and anything approaching to gossip he relentlessly opposed. For this reason he had resolved not to encourage the remarks he thought he was sure to hear on the recent exciting event.

"We were talking of what happened last night: I suppose you have heard of it?" said Mary, in reply to his question.

"Yes, yes; but I have not time to discuss that just now," he answered, impatiently. "Get tea ready as quick as you can. Where is mother?"

he asked, as his sister was leaving the room, glad to get out of so embarrassing a situation as taking part in a dialogue overheard by a third and unseen party.

"Upstairs, in her room: I am going to bring her down," said Mary, as she hastily left him.

Ronald paced restlessly up and down the room for a few minutes, then, by way of occupying the time, lighted the lamp.

As he did so, the cat sprang upon the table after a fly. He cuffed it off, but, dislodged from its perch, it flew up the window-curtains, in revenge, perhaps, for such summary treatment. He pursued it, but in lifting the creature down, the curtain to which it clung was drawn aside, and Jessy stood disclosed to his astounded vision.

Ronald's face at that moment would have made a picture.

"Jessy!" was all he could say, blushing to the roots of his hair, and looking the very image of dismay.

"What a pleasant surprise!" said she, her face all shining with mischievous glee. "You look as pleased as if I were the poor kitten's guardian angel, as indeed I think I have been, for who knows from what fate I saved it? What would you have done with it, now, if I had not been here? Given it a thrashing, no doubt. Oh! what an enviable destiny, to belong to the household that has a lordly ruler!—But here comes Betsy, and I must not assist in delaying tea any longer. Good evening, Ronald. Tell Mary I hope to see her soon at the Castle."

"Jessy!" remonstrated the discomfited Ronald, following her to the door, "I really must beg you to explain this strange behaviour. Why should you have concealed yourself behind the curtain?"

"Oh, just for the same reason that made the kitten run up it," was the prompt reply,—"you know what that was"

Again his face reddened, and he bit his lip, but made no response.

"You're not going away, Jessy?" asked Mary, who just then came on the scene, amused at the altercation going on between two people who seemed incapable of meeting without a similar result.

"Certainly, Mary: don't you see what an effort it costs your brother to bottle up his wrath even till after my departure?" returned the dauntless Jessy. "Won't you catch it for keeping him late!"

And, not waiting for Ronald's escort, she tripped down the path, and vanished.

Ronald did not evince much relish for tea that night. In reply to his mother's remarks regarding the arrest of Lesly and the smugglers, he returned only brief answers, and abruptly quitted the house shortly afterwards.

The following evening he gave indications of increased discomfort, and after spending some time in his room, went out without announcing his errand—a thing which until lately he had never been known to do; for all his actions were characterised by perfect openness.

Now this unaccountable change had struck Mary some time ago; but she was afraid to question one who resented anything savouring of inquisitiveness on the part of others. Nevertheless to most minds there comes a certain natural desire to ascertain the cause of some startling effect; nor was Mary's an exception in this respect. And soon she obtained a clue to the mystery in the fact, that on all her visits to Douglas Castle Ronald invariably accompanied her-an act of gallantry which somewhat surprised her at the time, as he had not been hitherto too dutiful in this particular. At first she thought his increasing fondness for those visits was due to closer attachment to Harry Douglas, whose unfailing kindness had laid them. all under deep obligations; but subsequent events speedily convinced her of her mistake. Harry was not unfrequently absent on these occasions, and Ronald seemed to find it very easy to reconcile himself to that gentleman's absence in listening to Jessy's performances on the piano, which, truth to state, were anything but of a masterly order.

Herein lay the key to the riddle. Ronald had never evinced the slightest taste for music, endorsing, in fact, the view of Dr. Johnson, that music is but "the most agreeable of noises"; and Mary naturally inferred that some other charm must be at work to hold him captive for a whole evening at the piano. A little observation sufficed to confirm her in this opinion, and the truth ultimately dawned upon her when she perceived that he actually submitted to be contradicted by the courageous Jessy without any indication of temper. This circumstance alone supplied the solution of

the mystery: Ronald had fallen a victim to love's all-subduing spell.

As usual in such cases, the discovery was accompanied by a feeling of surprise that she should have been so long blind to a patent fact. Hundreds of significant episodes recurred to memory, each of which might have indicated how the wind lay, had she been half awake to notice them.

But, self-evident as was now her brother's attitude of mind towards the fair Circe, no sagacity Mary possessed availed to enlighten her as to the state of Jessy's feelings. That young lady had been all her days notorious for a love of teasing, nor did this unhappy propensity, though held in abeyance during the past few years since her sister's death, seem to have really diminished, judging from her present demeanour toward her admirer, whose submission to her caprices seemed only to act as an incentive to more. It was, therefore, no surprise to Mary to witness these manifestations of the familiar tendency; but at the same time she noticed frequent relenting on the part of the incorrigible tormentor, and intervals of charming, winsome playfulness (too sweet, however, to last), during which Ronald assumed the meekness and docility of the lamb, Whether, however, these alternations of spleen and good-humour betokened anything more than the mere love of teasing, Mary was unable to determine, nor did Jessy's subsequent behaviour assist her in doing so.

But, unfortunately, she was not allowed to remain a passive spectator of this interesting by-play, for Jessy frequently contrived to inveigle her into her schemes for annoying Ronald, and sometimes even to make her a party to them, as on the occasion above described, when Jessy played the part of spy behind the curtains. Many a scolding from him she had had to submit to for those compulsory tricks; but as a rule, his severity was tempered with justice, knowing, as he well did, that she was but the puppet, whereas Jessy pulled the strings.

The curtain episode, however, appeared to have chagrined him in no common degree; for he had been scrupulously careful to suppress all ebullitions of temper in Jessy's presence, and excessively galling was it to find that she had after all become a witness of such domestic verities—verities which intending speculators in matrimony would be safer never to witness. How to remedy the fatal mis-

take was now his chief care; and when he set out on this particular evening, Mary had little doubt that his errand was to Douglas Castle.

Thither, indeed, he was bound, feeling more humiliated than ever he had done before, but resolved to dislodge from Jessy's mind the false impression she evidently entertained of him.

On arriving at his destination, he was told that Miss Douglas was in the drawing-room, and the ringing sounds which then were borne to his ear amply certified the fact.

When he entered the room, she continued her rumbling among the keys of the piano, not ceasing until he accosted her. Thereupon she rose, and received him with an air of nonchalance more aggravating than open hostility, resuming her playing immediately.

Stephen was reading at a table near the fire; but on Ronald's entrance, he was about to withdraw, when his sister peremptorily ordered him to take her place at the piano. Grown lad though he was, he had not yet thrown off his old habit of obedience to this somewhat tyrannical mistress, and, though not without serious reluctance, he put down his book, and began to touch the keys of the instrument with that delicacy to which they never failed to respond.

Jessy seemed peculiarly appreciative that night of her brother's music, scareely deigning to exchange a remark with the other disconsolate auditor, and contriving to keep Stephen so constantly playing, that remarks were hardly possible.

Curbing his impatience as best he could, Ronald sat silently listening to what was simply penance to his soul, which "had no music in itself, and was not moved by concord of sweet sounds"; until, to his infinite relief, the player left the piano, pleading weariness as his excuse, and presently went out of the room.

Now was his opportunity, he thought; and he crossed over to the chair Jessy occupied, a huge volume on her knee, in the contents of which she made believe to be deeply engrossed.

"Jessy," he began, in solemn accents, "I wish very much to speak to you."

"Well, if it's nothing disagreeable, I have no objection to hear it," said she, taking a side view of a picture she had that instant turned over; "only, don't look as if I were Mary, and you on the point of administering a fraternal scolding."

"You do me great injustice," protested he, drawing nearer. "I am sure Mary would not own to such a thing. I don't think you ever heard her accuse me of unkindness, nor my mother either."

"Oh dear no!" she replied. "I don't think Mary would complain although you wrung her neck. But I know very well you've got a horrid temper; I've seen indications of it many a time."

"Will you be good enough to specify any instance?" demanded Ronald, getting very red; for this kind of language was such as no one had ever addressed to him before.

"Well, to take a recent one, let me refer you to the charming little episode of last Tuesday night. How kindly you spoke to Mary! and how gently you dealt with the poor kitten! It would be too much to suppose I was privileged to witness the only scene of the kind ever transacted at Cliff Cottage."

"And do you think it was honourable to conceal yourself as you did?" asked Ronald, recovering a little from his embarrassment.

"Why, no: the kitten and I were both dishonourable, I fear; for I went behind the curtain, while she clambered up the other side. If justice had been done, I should have got my merited share of the cuffing."

"Jessy, you are really unmerciful: you seem to think me a sort of household demon."

"No: a household despot."

"You are complimentary. What, pray, justifies you in making such assertions against me? Have you ever seen anything in my conduct to warrant them?"

"You take precious good care that I don't see your choicest displays of lordly rule; but I have noticed that the cat always runs out of your way; Mary seldom ventures to contradict you, even when you're notoriously wrong; and your mother actually seems afraid of you at times. These things all show me how the wind blows."

"You certainly flatter me. Had I been your enemy I don't think you could have used your eyes to better purpose against me."

"I daresay not; but 'faithful are the wounds of a friend,' you know."

"A friend? Is it the part of a friend to traduce and annoy? What would you think of me if I were to presume to address such language to you? For I don't suppose your claim to censure me rests on any ascertained infallibility in yourself?"

"By no means; I have many faults, but I do not lay claim to that lofty superiority which makes you unmerciful to the weakness of others."

"I am not unmerciful to the weakness of others; you entirely misjudge me. I rather think the lack of charity lies with you."

"Not at all: the only people I have no charity for are people who, according to their own estimation, never do anything wrong, and are consequently very much at leisure to censure the faults of others less immaculate."

"Then I am to presume you reckon me one of the self-righteous class?"

"No, I rather think your besetting sin is obstinacy."

"Indeed? And what, may I inquire, is yours?"

"I need scarcely disclose it to one whose keen perceptions must already have discovered more than one besetting sin in me."

"And yet I have never indicated such knowledge by any unkindness or severity, have I?"

"Perhaps you have had no opportunity. I have little doubt you would, if it were in your power; but I'll take care it never is: 'forewarned is forearmed,' you know."

"Jessy, listen to me," he implored; but she ran off, and just at that instant her mother appeared in the doorway.

Blushing to the roots of his hair, and biting his lip with vexation, poor Ronald was left to meet Lady Douglas and converse with her as though nothing less serious than the disappointment of his dearest hope had happened.

For several days after this memorable incident, a marked change was observable in his demeanour; so marked, indeed, that both his mother and sister began to think he was falling sick. This supposition, however, was boldly flouted by the shrewd Betsy, who declared, with a significant grimace, that "he wad be waur afore he was better"; a prediction which seemed likely to be fulfilled. From the beginning her keen eyes had detected symptoms of the malady from which her master was now suffering so severely, and though she kept "a calm sough," wondering all the while at the blindness of Mrs. Errol and her daughter to so palpable a fact, she watched with growing interest the process by which this "wilful man" was

surely becoming a slave to one who appeared so well able to rule him. Of the possession of such a desirable capacity Miss Douglas gave ample proof; and, satisfied on this point, Betsy wished to see the consumnation of a match which would throw the balance of power on the right side.

To her, therefore, Ronald's extraordinary meekness and silence brought only further confirmation of her belief that the crisis was approaching, which she fervently hoped would terminate favourably.

Nevertheless, when a whole fortnight went past without bringing any change in his precarious condition, and Miss Douglas held resolutely aloof from the Cottage, even she began to feel a little anxious. What if, after all, his suit had been rejected?

This fear, however, was finally dissipated, when, one evening shortly afterwards, Ronald, instead of settling down in moody silence to a book, retired to his room, from which he emerged shortly afterwards altogether renovated in appearance, and then, without any announcement of his errand, went out of the house.

Dark and cold though the night was, he seemed hardly to notice it, but walked along the solitary road with a quick resolute step, like that of one who has important business on hand, never halting till he came in sight of the brightly illuminated windows of Douglas Castle.

His visits there had not been so infrequent during the past year as to escape the notice and comment of the servants; and the man who now admitted him checked a smirk just in time, and conducted him to the dining-room, where he was received by Lady Douglas herself.

Her manner betokened slight embarrassment. for already she had divined the cause of those repeated visits, which assuredly were not paid to herself; and, although Mr. Errol's birth and growing prosperity made him an eligible suitor, his character had never particularly recommended itself to her favour, and she would have preferred to see another claimant to her daughter's affections in the person of a distant relative of her own. Cecil Howard, who had betrayed genuine admiration for Jessy's bewitching ways. Not receiving any encouragement, however, the prudent youth had resigned his suit; so that all prospect of this alliance had to be abandoned. But the question was, did Mr. Errol's addresses find any greater acceptance in her whimsical daughter's eyes?

Hopeless problem, alas! which only mocked the mother's efforts to solve it. The single indication of pleasure in Ronald's society given by Miss Jessy consisted in her unwearied attempts to annoy him. Nor, when remonstrated with on the point, would she afford the slightest clue to the real state of her feelings toward this unhappy swain. Her father, however, had peremptorily declared that she must either at once discourage his advances, or make up her mind to accept him. Unlike his wife, he felt predisposed in Mr. Errol's favour, assured, as he had never been in his poor brother's case, that he would be true to his trust, and never disappoint the hopes built upon him.

With such an alternative unexpectedly put before her, Miss Jessy became as restive as a young colt for the first time in harness, indulging in so many extraordinary freaks, that it was as well her lover deferred his visit until this evening, when she seemed somewhat restored to sobriety.

She had been all day sequestered in what by courtesy was termed her studio-a room littered with all an artist's paraphernalia, containing, in fact, everything necessary for the elegant art with the exception of one little trifle-genius. Not that Jessy was destitute of talent entirely; but she lacked the great essential to excellence in any department of art-perseverance. In proof of this you had only to look round upon the numerous canvas frames smeared with unintelligible dashes of colour, from which, doubtless, fair landscapes and striking groups were to have been evolved; only each design had been superseded while in process of execution by another more captivating, with the inevitable result of failure in all.

Now, aware as Lady Douglas was, that her daughter's future destiny depended on the answer she returned to her devoted lover to-night, she could scarcely fail to betray something of her anxiety in her manner toward Mr. Errol. So difficult, indeed, did she find it to carry on conversation, that presently, excusing herself for leaving him, she went away in quest of her daughter, who, whether she knew that Ronald was in the house or not, did not seem at all anxious to meet him.

"Ronald Errol is in the dining-room, Jessy," said Lady Douglas, approaching the assiduous artist. "You cannot play with his feelings in this way any longer; and you must do what your

father and I have enjoined as your duty. If he finds acceptance in your eyes, we will put no obstacle in the way of your marriage; but if otherwise, you must tell him so, and end this foolish trifling. Your own good sense will show you this is the only ladylike course to take. Don't keep him waiting; there's no one with him just now."

So saying, the mother left the apartment, taking a brief but close scrutiny of her daughter's kindling face, which nevertheless indicated nothing capable of being construed as either favourable or prejudicial to the suit in question.

She did not leave her easel for five minutes or more, when Stephen came in with a request from Mr. Errol for her presence.

"Tell him to come here," was her reply; and she continued dabbling away at the sketch on which she was engaged, until Ronald's firm, manly tread, as he entered, made her look up.

"Good evening," he said. "I fear I am intruding, you appear so busy."

She rose to receive him, saying: "Yes, I was anxious to finish this to-day. I hope Mrs. Errol and Mary are well—and the kitten too?"

A quick flush mounted to his brow; but, taking no notice of the malicious innuendo, he stepped up to examine the work which had proved so engrossing.

Totally unprepared was he for the picture delineated on the canvas. There, with considerable fidelity, was portrayed the familiar parlour of his own home. In the foreground he recognised himself in an attitude of ungovernable passion, with his arm raised threateningly against a cowering woman, whose resemblance to his sister was too close to be mistaken. By the fireside sat an old lady, easily to be identified as Mrs. Errol, whose trembling hand was raised deprecatingly as though to ward off the imminent blow from his. At the door an old servant, remarkably like Betsy both in looks and dress, was making a hasty escape, her terrified face directed backward to the central figures. A cat was depicted rushing frantically up the windowcurtains for safety from the commotion going on below. Underneath were inscribed the words: "Britons never never shall be slaves,"

"You see I'm not an adherent of the *ideal* school," said Jessy, pretending not to notice his discomfiture; "I prefer the realistic; I like to be

true to life, and depict it as it really is. Don't you think this is a tolerably fair representation of life at Cliff Cottage?"

"This may be very amusing to you, Jessy," said Roland, in grave, severe tones; "but I can assure you I have no intention of being made the butt of your pleasantry. If your opinion of me is so utterly mean, you had better tell me at once that you wish our intimacy ended."

Jessy's brush still kept flirting over her palette; but at the sound of those imperative words, she changed colour, and became perceptibly nervous, despite her efforts at concealment.

Perceiving his advantage, Ronald continued: "Do you really wish to insinuate that I tyrannise over my mother and sister, and make them miserable?"

"Not exactly," she admitted; "but men can render their homes miserable without any conduct of this sort," pointing to her sketch.

"Will you be good enough to specify a few of the ways in which I accomplish this end?"

"Yes: you are cross, unless everything happens according to your liking; you won't brook contradiction; and you expect everyone to bow to your mandate, as if you were the Grand Turk, or the Caliph of Bagdad, or any other irresponsible despot. You don't seem to think that the pleasure of your subjects should sometimes be considered, if your rule is to be at all endurable."

"You flatter me, Jessy. But do you know, you have taxed my self-control to the utmost limits: no other person on earth would have dared to speak to me as you have done."

opinions contradictory of his own, unless when the ambassador from a free state pays him a visit, and reminds him there are regions over which his dominion does not extend, and where he must make up his mind to hear the language of freedom."

"This is more than the language of freedom; it is the language of rebellion and hatred."

"It is the language of one who knows the sweets of freedom too well ever to be a slave."

Jessy rose as she pronounced these words, with a haughty, defiant toss of her head, and proceeded to gather up her brushes, etc.

Now it so happened that she had never looked more captivating than at this moment. The

flashing eyes, the pouting lips, and kindling face, so far from provoking resentment, made her irresistibly charming. So very charming, indeed, that Ronald, Peleus-like, resolved to lay hold on this erratic Thetis, no matter what formidable shapes she might assume. All his displeasure was lost in admiration of this bewitching, elusive goddess, who seemed to attract even while she repulsed him.

For a few moments he stood intently regarding her, as she made haste to be gone, then, seizing her hand in a firm resistless grasp, and imprisoning her waist with his arm, he said with impetuous ardour: "If you would not stoop to be a slave, will you be a queen?"

She struggled for the first moment or two, and tried hard to look displeased; but, the effort failing, she was fain to smile, coyly, but most sweetly, and, looking up into the handsome manly visage that was beginning to smile too, she said: "Yes; but only the queen of a good king, not the queen of a despot."

What transpired after this need not be detailed: some things are better imagined than described; and no exceptionally active imagination is required to supply the reader with a tolerably accurate idea of the scene on this occasion. Suffice it to say, that, when Jenny, some time afterwards, popped into the studio to clear away, as usual, the mess which she invariably found there after her mistress's artistic efforts, quite unaware that the room was not empty, she drew back as if she had got an electric shock, and ran off to the servants' hall, where the date of the impending marriage and all its attendant circumstances were fixed and arranged straightway.

If, with less precipitation, these matters, after due discussion, were agreed to by Sir Edward and Lady Douglas, who, however reluctant to part with their only remaining daughter, whose brightness, vivacity, and warm-heartedness withal had made her presence so delightful in the old home, were nevertheless ready to make the sacrifice, when assured that Jessy's heart was really in the marriage. For, as she herself said in speaking to her mother on the subject: "Mamma, I've loved him all along, only I wanted to educate him a bit before putting myself in his power." She would not consent, however, to marry until the summer—"and perhaps not even then," she averred, laughing.

On the happy night of his betrothal, Ronald walked home on air. Never in all his life had he felt so benevolent and well-disposed toward his fellow-creatures. When he reached the Cottage, he could hardly refrain from embracing old Betsy, who, in turn, read the message of joy in his beaming face.

He found his mother just preparing to go to

"Mother," he said, "Jessy Douglas has consented to be my wife,"

She smiled the happiest smile her face had worn since before the cruel disaster that broke her heart. "May the Lord's blessin' be on ye baith," she said. "She'll be a gude wife, as she's been a gude dochter, and I'm suir ye'll be happy. Ye couldna hae chosen ane mair after my ain heart; for I aye likeit the lassie."

Then Mary came in, and, hearing the good news, she came up to her brother—the brother who had always been good and true, despite his "maisterfu' ways," as Betsy called them; and, putting her arms round his neek, stood on tiptoe to give him her kiss of congratulation.

"I'm so happy, Ronald," she said, with her serene, sympathetic smile. "She has been like a sister to me all our lives, so that this will just make us sisters in reality. We'll all be proud of Mrs. Ronald Errol. Won't we, mother?"

But Mrs. Errol had moved away, unwilling that they should see the tears called forth even by this happy event; for there had rushed back on her heart the memory of another marriage she had once looked forward to with fond pride, and the old wound bled afresh.

"And what are we to do without the head of the house?" asked Mary, half mournfully, as she contemplated the absence from the place that had known him so long of this brother, to whose patient, unflagging industry and self-denial they really owed their home.

"You'll be glad to get rid of me, I should think," he responded, smiling, "since I've been such a tyrant as Jessy declares I've been."

"Does she say that? Well, you'll convince her of her mistake by showing her what a kind husband you can be. And of one thing I am sure: you could not have found in all the world a nobler, more lovable woman for your wife than Jessy Douglas."

"I know it, Mary. I'm not worthy of her," was the frank confession of Ronald Errol.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ACTUS EXTREMUS FABUL.E.

IF Douglas Castle had been preparing itself for a siege, as it had more than once done in the course of its history, it could hardly have presented an aspect of greater disorder and confusion than now, on the approach of Jessy's wedding.

That eccentric young lady had dallied so long before consenting to "name the day," that there remained little time for the completion of the necessary arrangements. Only on compulsion, indeed, and after several changes of mind at the last juncture, had even this decision been brought about, and, consequently everything had to be done at once, and in a hurry. Tradesmen were continually coming and going; generally in sore perplexity as to what they should take in hand first, before receiving a countermand from the capricious bride-elect. Boxes and parcels succeeded one another in endless numbers, most of them containing wedding-gifts. Friends trooped in to tender their good wishes and congratulations, often departing in considerable uncertainty as to whether their young friend considered herself a subject for congratulation or commiseration. The servants, while enjoying the turmoil, were often in distraction, owing to the contradictory orders they received. No member of the household, in fact, could escape from the general ferment; even poor Stephen found himself banished from his most secluded haunts, and obliged to submit to the exigencies of the times.

None suffered so much, however, during this trying period as the intended bridegroom himself, who could scarcely snatch even the briefest interviews with the refractory Jessy. Indeed, her demeanour toward himself might have exhausted the forbearance of a more submissive soul. The tenderest expression she favoured him with was, "Get away, Ronald; I hate you." Not the most reassuring prelude to matrimonial felicity, certainly; yet all he received in earnest of his future. It was too late to complain now, however, and he was glad to have his sister's consolation, viz.: that Iessy teased most where she loved most.

It was now within a week of the wedding, and

for several days previously he had not seen his betrothed, who had gone off to Edinburgh to superintend the completion of her trousseau. She was expected to return earlier, but, as usual, she was late, not arriving till the third day before the great event.

On the evening of that same day, Mary and her brother set out together for the Castle. They had been much together lately, and, now that the old brother-and-sister life was so soon to terminate. and Ronald leave them for a home of his own in Lynnburgh, the deeply-rooted affection, which, however it may seem to slumber, never really dies in the hearts wherein nature has implanted it, began to manifest itself more strongly than it had ever done before. Despite his occasional outbursts of temper and his intolerance of opposition, Ronald had never cost either his mother or sister an anxious thought, proving himself always a true son and brother in whom they could safely confide; and his honest struggles to maintain them in comfort at a time when everything looked dark entitled him to their lasting gratitude. To lose him was therefore no small trial, especially to Mary, on whom greater responsibilities would thus devolve.

As they walked along in the calm summer twilight, they were talking of by-gone days, and principally of the lost and still lamented Kenneth.

"I don't think I could stoop to the meanness of rejoicing over a fallen enemy," said Ronald, in reply to a remark his sister had made; "but I confess, when I heard that Lesly had been identified as the notorious London forger who escaped the law so long, and that he had been sentenced to penal servitude for life for that and his rascality here, I was glad, because people would see how far poor Kenneth was to blame for what he did. With such a man for his guide, no wonder he fell. But I can't bear to talk of it, Mary: it cuts me to the quick," he broke off. "Let us try to be cheerful now; it won't do to appear at the Castle with sad faces: folk will say I've begun to rue my choice, which is very far from the case, as you know, Mary."

"Yes," she answered, dismissing the melancholy thoughts arising within her then, and returning his hopeful smile.

After a few minutes of silence, he continued: "And don't think, Mary, that this marriage is going to make any difference in my relations to

you and mother. Jessy and I will be with you often, and you must come as often to us, and look on our home as yours. It isn't as if my wife were a stranger; for you and Jessy know one another almost as well as sisters, and I know she loves you dearly, Mary—better, I sometimes think, than she does me; at least she often says so."

Mary laughed, declaring she was hardly prepared to credit her outspoken friend's veracity in this instance, at any rate; and then she had to listen, as all dutiful sisters must on similar occasions, to a long eulogium on the virtues and surpassing excellence of her future sister-in-law.

It was not yet ended when they reached their destination. The wide gates were thrown open, for a carriage had just swept up the avenue, and was at this instant stopping at the front entrance.

"Do you know who has come?" inquired Mary of the porter's wife, who stood courtesying to them as they passed; for she still retained her aversion to meeting strangers, and was unwilling to intrude on her friends while they were receiving other guests.

"It's Lady Joan, ma'am," replied the woman. "She gied me ane o' her kind nods as she drove by; an' I think she's come to bide till after the weddin'. Good evening to ye, sir," she added, courtesying to Ronald. "I doot we'll a' hae a grudge at ye for rinnin' aff wi' Sir Edward's bonny dochter."

"Na, na, Mrs. Denny: she goes with her own consent," returned he, smiling affably as they passed on. His happiness had wrought a wonderful transformation in his manner, which had become almost genial. His was one of those natures which, like the flowers, unfold all their sweetness in the sunshine, but wither under the cold blasts of adversity.

On reaching the Castle, they encountered the newly-arrived visitor, who had just entered, and was giving directions about the disposal of her boxes, one of which she wished conveyed to her room directly.

She greeted Mary with warm affection, then, addressing Ronald, said:

"And so, you are the successful thief? Well, I must defer my scolding, for here comes Jessy herself, looking tolerably reconciled to the rape, I must say. How are you, dear?" she asked of the lady in question, who, however, replied by clutching her aunt in an embrace so demonstrative, that

the good woman's bonnet suffered considerable detriment, being well-nigh crushed out of shape.

"Jessy, for shame!" remonstrated Lady Douglas, interfering to save her sister-in-law from further violence. "Come, Joan," she added, "your room is in readiness. Jessy, take your aunt upstairs."

"You must come too, Mary," demanded Jessy; and the trio departed, Lady Joan encircled by her niece's arm all the way; while Ronald followed Lady Douglas to her husband's study, where she left him to conclude some necessary preliminaries to the marriage, in the shape of a settlement, about which he had several times before spoken to the baronet, without any satisfactory result.

When Lady Joan had divested herself of her injured bonnet and mantle, in the room appropriated to her use, she inquired for the box she had ordered to be brought upstairs, which had not yet come. It was presently carried in, and, as she unlocked it, she said: "Jessy dear, this is my wedding gift. Come and tell me if you are pleased with it."

So saying, she lifted from its wrappers of tissuepaper a veil of lace, so fine that it seemed as if it were woven of silver cobwebs.

Jessy clasped her hands in ecstasy, and the next moment was down on her knees beside her aunt, hugging her in a manner fraught with danger to the veil, had it not been dropped in time.

As soon as she was released, the old lady produced from the box a casket, which, on being opened, displayed a necklace of rainbow-lustred diamonds. And, while her niece, half-awed and half-enraptured by their brilliancy, was absorbed in admiring it, and inviting Mary Errol to do the same, she quietly said: "Child, these were to have been my ornaments once. They were laid aside long ago—buried with the dreams I cherished then of earthly happiness. But I had destined them for our darling Ada, before she drooped and died."

Tears were glistening in Jessy's bright eyes at the mention of that dear name, which to her was more sacred than any other; and she shed them on her aunt's sympathetic bosom, which glowed still with the love she had ever borne toward her who was gone.

But it was Mary's heart that ached the most at the sudden recurrence of bitter memories not yet bereft of their sting. And Lady Joan's keen intuitions instantly divined her deeper grief, and led her to check the tenor of conversation. "Come, come, this will never do," she presently declared, in cheerful tones. "You must tell me what you think of my gifts, Jessy, and promise to wear them on Friday. I suppose you are to be chief bridesmaid, Mary dear?" she added, addressing Miss Errol.

"I have no alternative," replied she; "Jessy would take no denial; though I fear I shall look sadly out of place in such a capacity. It seems very absurd that an old maid like me should figure in gauze and flowers; don't you think so, Lady loan?"

"Not at all, my dear: you are much too youthful to be relegated to that despised class, to which I have the honour to belong. And as for the dress, why, you must allow us to superintend it, Mary dear, and we'll make you look quite charming; shan't we, Jessy?"

"Oh, I have arranged all that, aunt," replied Jessy. "Mary has consented to be ruled by me for once in this matter; and I'm sure you'll all approve my taste, when you see her on Friday. Oh, dear! I wish it was next year! I'm so nervous when I think of it. I only hope I won't faint."

"Then I'll be at hand with strong smellingsalts," rejoined Lady Joan; "and Harry will be provided with a bucket of water, which will soon restore you; though I fear the orange-blossoms won't be improved by the wetting. What do you think, Mary?"

"I have no fear that either the smelling-salts or the water will be required," was Mary's answer. "I'm sure Jessy would retain her presence of mind even if she were on the verge of shipwreck."

"And so I am," promptly asserted that doomed damsel, with so rueful an expression of face, that both her aunt and Mary burst out a-laughing; and continuing their good-humoured banter, they went downstairs together, in answer to the summons of the gong.

When tea was over, Jessy conducted her two friends into an adjoining room to inspect her wedding gifts, many of which had newly arrived. But while she was engaged in this pleasant task, Jenny, her maid, came to summon her to see a milliner, who had just arrived from Lynnburgh on urgent business.

"You see how I'm tormented," exclaimed Jessy, as she proceeded to comply with the unreasonable

demand. "My troubles are just beginning, I see. I've a good mind to recant even vet."

"Well, then, the sooner you do so the better," recommended her aunt; "only, you mustn't expect to retain all those handsome presents. Mary and I will get them packed up and returned to their respective owners, whenever you give us instructions to do so."

"What nonsense has Jessy been talking?" asked Lady Douglas, who came into the room as her daughter left it.

"She's threatening to loose with her teeth the knot her tongue has tied," was Lady Joan's reply. "But I don't think she'll attempt it: she seems remarkably pleased to be bound.—I had no idea she had so many friends. See what a host of offerings they have made her, and all so beautiful."

"Yes, she was always a favourite. The tenantry have lavished gifts upon her," assented the proud mother; "and the servants presented her with those two handsome porcelain vases. I think Jessy valued them more than all the others.—Here is Mr. Dunbar's gift," she added, pointing to a large Bible richly bound in morocco. "Have you seen it, Mary?"

"Yes; he took me with him when he bought it," she replied, looking at the inscription on the fly-leaf, which ran:—"To Miss Jessy Douglas, on the eve of her marriage, from her old and esteemed friend, John Dunbar.—'The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

"What an appropriate benediction," remarked Lady Joan, as she too read the words. "After all, if we want to find expression for the best and deepest wishes of our hearts, we must go to the Bible."

"True, true," assented her sister-in-law. "I trust Jessy will be guided by it all her life."

After a few more minutes of inspection of the costly articles strewn all about the apartment, Lady Douglas was called away on some domestic business, and shortly afterwards a message came from Jessy, demanding her aunt's immediate attendance. Accordingly Mary was left alone, and was occupying herself by examining such of the marriage gifts as she had not yet seen, when Stephen Douglas came into the room—a book in his hand, as usual.

He halted abruptly on seeing Mary there, and was about to retire when she said:

"Don't mind me, Stephen: I'm not a stranger, you know.—You must find it difficult to study amid all this turmoil, don't you?"

"Yes, I wish it were over," he assented, advancing to the window, which stood open to admit the evening breeze, for the day had been unusually warm

"And yet, I'm sure you'll be very sorry when Jessy leaves you," she continued.

"Yes; although she was a decided tease.—I hate changes, and yet I begin to see life is nothing but a series of changes; and the worst of it is we change too. If we could only rely on ourselves keeping the same, we might have at least one satisfaction; but you see, we can't."

"I fear your philosophy is making your views of life too sombre. Changes are not unmitigated evils, and if we change for the better, there is cause for rejoicing rather than regret. Don't you think so?"

"But we all change for the worse, I think. There's a principle of deterioration in everything, human nature included; and there seems no remedy for it."

"There is one remedy; you will find it here, Stephen." said Mary, pointing to the large Bible.

"So they say; but I haven't found it," he replied; and, without waiting for further conversation, he passed out to the terrace.

Mary understood his moody frame of mind, and was not surprised by his abrupt behaviour. Ever since the death of his much-loved sister, and the subsequent loss of Kenneth Errol, to whom he had been deeply attached, he had been a prey to melancholy, and had given himself to pursuits which only tended to confirm it. His health, too, had been impaired, and partly accounted for the depression of spirits from which he suffered. But the true explanation was, that he had recognised himself to be a solitary soul, with but few interests in common with ordinary humanity, and devoid of all exterior means of attracting or enlisting their regard. There are such natures, we know; and yet, despite the barrier of reserve that separates them from others, in them will often be found deep and wide sympathy with the joys and sorrows, the general lot of those from whom they seem to stand aloof. To this class belonged Stephen Douglas; and Mary knew that under the shield of reserve wherewith he, like all sensitive spirits, had encompassed

himself, there beat as gentle and loving a heart as ever warmed the breast of man. His very isolation won her sympathy, and she stood watching his departure with a growing wish within her to brighten life's pathway for him, if possible.

Thus she fell into a fit of musing, with which the calm evening hour was in exquisite harmony. In the opal sky the stars were beginning to twinkle, their lustre increasing as the shadows deepened. The balmy air came wafted from the gardens, laden with the perfume of roses. A blackbird was warbling its evening song on the spray of an ash-tree hard by, whose leaves seemed to quiver in ecstasy to the music. Mary listened with a delight no less, revelling in those capricious gushes of melody, which seemed the very outflow of joy. So intent, indeed, was she in listening to the artless songster, that she did not hear a footstep behind her, or notice that some one had come into the room, who stood still, observing her in silence, as if unwilling to break the charm.

By one of those strange instincts, however, which often apprise us of an unseen presence, Mary byand-by turned and saw Harry Douglas standing near, watching her.

He came forward, his manner shyand embarrassed as he observed her startled look. There was a flush on his frank, handsome face, and his brown, saucy eyes fell on encountering Mary's.

The colour rose on her cheek as well, and for a moment she looked about for some means of escape from what the intuitions of her own heart told her was coming.

But Harry placed himself between her and the open window, and, seizing one of her hands with a passionate gesture, said, entreatingly: "Don't run away, Mary; I have something that I must tell you."

Then in a voice tremulous with deep feeling, he poured into her ear the story of his long-cherished love. He told her no other woman on earth had ever, for a moment, eclipsed her in his affections; that all through the by-gone years she had held possession of his heart, which had never swerved from her even when he saw another winning the prize he would have bought with his life. And although he knew she could not give him the love she had given to Raymond Dunbar, he would be content to accept such love as his own devotion and her kindness must surely create. "Yes, Mary," he pleaded, "I will take the second place

in your heart, and give you the first in mine. I only ask you to let me love you, and prove how real my love is by making you as happy as a poor fellow like me can make so good a woman as you. For I know you are too good for me, Mary," he went on, "and maybe I don't deserve you so well as Raymond; yet, believe me, he never loved you more than I have done; and if only you'll consent to marry me, your happiness shall be the dearest object in life to me."

She had glanced but once at his face while he pled his suit; but that glance was enough to destroy her fortitude. Tears were in those brown, honest eyes bent so beseechingly and tenderly on her; and the full red lips quivered with the earnestness of his feelings, as they uttered their touching appeal. She bent her head lower and lower to hide the drops that fell from her eyes, while the heaving of her bosom betrayed the agitation she strove to conceal. As he proceeded, the colour faded from her face, over which had come an expression almost like fear.

And now his voice had ceased, and in ill-disguised suspense he was awaiting her answer. For several minutes she could frame none, so many and so strange were the feelings that passed through her mind; but at last, with a look serious and sorrowful, she said:

"I have done you a great wrong, if by anything I have said or done I have led you to believe my mind was changed. I thought you understood me; and how could I be otherwise than grateful for all the goodness you have shown to me and mine throughout our time of grief and trouble? I never dreamed, so fixed was my own mind, that you could think it changed. Oh, Harry!" she continued, in tones of genuine regret, "your cruellest words could not have hurt me so much as those you spoke but now. Surely you cannot think I have so soon forgotten him who had all my love while he lived, and has it still, though he is gone? When he asked my love, I gave it to him, not only for the little while we might be together here, but for ever; and, having done so, it is not mine to bestow on any one else, even were I so inclined."

Harry's face was grave and sad as he replied:

"I only asked the second place in your affections, Mary: have I asked too much?"

The mournful, appealing tenderness of his voice and mien smote her to the heart, and for some seconds she could not speak. Soon, however, she summoned courage to say, tenderly, yet resolutely:

"No man should ask the second place in any woman's affection. If his love be true, it deserves the first place, and should be content with no other. If I were to do what you ask me, and marry you with only feelings of gratitude and kindness in my heart, do you think you would be happy? No: you would of necessity crave a like return of your affection, and be ever seeking from me what I could not give. Then you would be miserable, and in time come to be bitterly disappointed, and repent of your choice. Such a marriage would be a mockery, and, on my part, a sin; for I regard myself as much Raymond's wife as if I had been made such by marriage rites. And since I have given my heart's love to him, I can be wife to no other. No, Harry," she added, in simple, truthful earnestness, "I would do you a cruel wrong, were I to listen to you; and if I have led you to believe such a thing possible, as it seems I must have done, I can only pray you to forgive me, and to believe that I have too true a regard for Harry Douglas to marry him without the love he ought to have from the woman he makes his wife."

Hope forsook poor Harry then, and, pale even to the lips, he extended his hand, saying:

"Forgive me, Mary; I have indeed made a grievous mistake, and one that I don't think can ever be remedied; but my disappointment should be sufficient punishment, and I think you would pity me if you knew how great it is."

"Harry, I do pity you," cried Mary, her tears bearing witness to the words; "and I entreat you to forgive me for the pain I have caused you. Believe me, I would atone for it, if I could."

"You could, if you would, Mary," he answered, with a bitter smile, trying to release his hand.

But she still clasped it, and, looking up into his grieved face with one of those sweet, pensive smiles seen at times now on her own, she answered:

"No, you wrong me; and some day you will own, that Mary Errol was right when she refused to be your wife."

He only pressed her hand, and, with a gaze of mingled love and reproach that haunted her for many a day, bade her good-bye.

She watched him vanish down the terraced walks, with feelings of acute self-reproach for having

thus caused a renewal of the old pain, which must rankle henceforth until assuaged by the merciful hand of time. That time would ere long heal his wound, she could not doubt, for she had read his character more accurately than he himself had done; and could thus foresee for him compensation at no distant date; but she regretted even the appearance of having trifled with the affections of so generous a friend. Fervently she wished she could have avoided meeting him so soon again, but there was no help for it: to retract her promise to Jessy was impossible; and in dread and misgiving she contemplated her position on the wedding-day.

One consolation, however, was hers: no one in the Castle except herself knew of Harry's proposal; nor did any other ever afterwards hear of it from her scrupulous lips.

The auspicious day arrived at last, and no day more befitting such an occasion could have been chosen. The sky was serene and cloudless, and the sun was certainly going to shine on this bride, whose happiness it might seem to portend. The season of the year, also, was propitious, being the latter end of August, when flowers were blooming in profusion, whose fragrance invited the guests to step into the gardens and enjoy the balmy air.

Banners were to have floated from the turrets of the Castle, and floral arches to have been reared throughout the grounds; but the memory of that terrible bereavement, the bitterness of which had not passed away, made such demonstrations of rejoicing appear unseemly; and the disappointed tenantry had to content themselves with quieter methods of celebrating the grand event.

The wedding was to take place at twelve o'clock. Two hours before that time carriages began to stream up the avenue, depositing at the main entrance their gaily-attired occupants, who disappeared one by one within the hall.

Among the last to arrive was one containing the bridegroom himself, his mother and sister, and Mr. Dunbar, now a feeble old man, whose faltering steps required constant support. When he alighted, Ronald Errol drew his arm within his own, offering the other to his mother, who looked but the shadow of the once handsome woman all remembered so well.

The splendid room in which the ceremony was to be enacted seemed still more splendid now, with its profusion of flowers, its glittering gems, and gay attire. The sight was almost dazzling, and the hum of voices very confusing to the little group, now unobtrusively entering; and Mary was in quest of some known face among the crowd, when Lady Joan's welcome voice fell upon her ear, and the next moment she was folded in a loving caress. Mrs. Errol, too, received the same cordial welcome, and they stood conversing for a few moments, until Lady Joan said: "But I must carry your daughter upstairs, Mrs. Errol; for Jessy specially wishes to see her."

And accordingly Mary accompanied her to the room, where the bride was donning her wedding garments.

A most trying scene it was. Jessy was one moment laughing; another crying; now venting her petulant displeasure upon poor Jenny for some awkward blunder; again, upbraiding herself for her own stupidity, and imploring her maid's assistance,

On Mary's entrance, she burst into a fit of weeping, which, however, soon gave place to one of affected merriment.

"Come, Mary," said she, as her friend advanced to render help in the adjustment of that gossamer veil which Lady Joan had given, "come and assist to deck the victim for the sacrifice."

"With pleasure," assented Mary; "I don't think any victim ever approached the altar with less misgivings than you, Jessy."

"Oh, you heartless creature!" exclaimed the victim in question; "I hope you'll be in my position some day, and learn repentance for that cruel speech."

A knock at the door at this moment caused her to turn pale. It was a message from Sir Edward Douglas to know whether his daughter was ready to come down, as the hour had struck and the guests were becoming impatient.

"The knell of doom!" said Jessy. But this was her last attempt at merriment, as she was obliged to make haste to make herself ready.

Her mother and aunt went downstairs a few moments before she came, followed by her train of white-robed bridesmaids, at the head of which walked Mary Errol, looking very attractive, despite the silver threads in her hair, and the serious aspect she wore.

A hush fell upon the assembled throng, when the baronet led his daughter through their midst to the end of the room where Ronald, attended by his groomsman, Harry Douglas, stood awaiting the bride

She took her place beside him, the bridesmaids forming a white line next her.

Then the venerable minister came forward, and in tones solemn, impressive, and yet benign, laid upon them the vows that bound them to each other until death should them part. He closed the ceremony with a prayer for a divine blessing on the two young lives, henceforth to be but one, closing with the words: "Guide their bark safely o'er life's perilous sea, through calm and storm alike, and bring them at last, when their voyage is over, into the quiet haven, where storm and shipwreck are unknown."

Then followed the buzz of congratulations, to all of which the bride returned most startling answers; the distribution of cake, accompanied with the usual excitement anent the discovery of the thimble, sixpence, etc., which articles are supposed to prefigure the destinies of the finders.

Amid the bustle and merriment, the important personage of the hour made good her escape, to exchange her wedding robes for others better adapted to the requirements of travel.

The carriage, drawn by four white horses, each decked with knots of ribbons, stood waiting at the door, where the expectant guests were now beginning to congregate, provided, many of them, with the customary emblems of good luck in the shape (or rather shapelessness) of "bachels"—a term unintelligible to the dwellers south of the Tweed, but quite familiar to all who ever attended a Scotch wedding.

When at last Mrs. Ronald Errol appeared, accompanied by a troop of relatives and friends, each of whom took an opportunity of bestowing a parting caress, there arose a general furore; and Ronald experiencednosmall difficulty in conducting his bride through the crowd to the carriage, which they entered amid a perfect deluge of old shoes and rice. The old coachman, who sat on the box with an imposing cockade in his hat, elate with conscious self-importance as became one who had the duty assigned him of driving the newly-wedded pair all the way to Lynnburgh, was unfortunately so pelted with misdirected "bachels" that both his hat and spruce new livery sustained lasting injuries.

So with kindly faces and voices around her to

the last, the baronet's daughter left the home where had passed the "bright morning" of her youth. And perhaps there were some who, as they saw her depart that sunny summer day to enter upon all the responsibilities and graver experiences of after life, thought within themselves;

"She goes from a love both tried and true, She goes to a love that still is new."

But none of them entertained a wish that was not friendly toward her; and their genial smiles made a sort of sunset brightness round the close of her girlhood's day.

At the marriage feast which followed there were sad hearts as well as merry ones. Is it ever otherwise? Are not marriages akin to deaths in this, that they involve separation and the severing of ties which nature and time have combined to strengthen? Do not both entail the uprooting of old customs and the cessation of familiar intercourse through many a happy year? What marvel, then, if wedding-bells send forth at times a note whose cadence reminds us of a knell.

Both in the Castle and the Cottage a blank had been made which could never again be filled up. True, the young couple were to reside within a short distance of Glenathole, so that frequent intercourse might be anticipated; yet the old familiar life was over for ever: henceforth they must meet in a new capacity, and the friends left behind prepare to see those once among them drifting further and further away on the ever-widening current of new and diverging interests.

Very lonely was Cliff Cottage when Mrs. Errol and her daughter returned to it that night. Strange indeed it seemed not to hear the accustomed footfall on the threshold; stranger still to close the door, without first being assured by Ronald himself that he was home for the night. Often, often afterwards, through sheer force of habit, would Mary hesitate before turning the key in the lock at evening, until she suddenly recollected that her brother was in his own home at Lynnburgh.

On the day preceding his marriage Ronald had shown his mother and sister a title-deed, whereby he had made over to them for life the cottage they now occupied—an arrangement in which Sir Edward Douglas had heartily concurred. He had also settled upon them an income sufficient to maintain them in luxury; this being comparatively easy for

him, now that his labours were productive of such ample results. For, as before mentioned, he was now a prosperous man, who could afford to purchase the largest mansion in Lynnburgh for himself and his young wife. To be generous, therefore, was in his case a possibility as well as a pleasure.

So Mrs. Errol and her daughter lived on at the Cottage, where so many eventful years had been spent, relieved from the anxiety about the means of livelihood, which had once been only too familiar to them before Ronald's efforts brought about a happier state of things. They were glad to remain despite the painful associations of the place. Mrs. Errol was now too frail to make a change of abode other than a very great risk, and besides, she wished to be near her son and the few friends whose acquaintance had been a solace in times of trouble.

Of these none occupied so prominent a place as old Mr. Dunbar, whose increasing infirmities demanded constant attention, while his unabated kindness and simple piety made his friendship very delightful to them. All Mary's spare hours were devoted to him. Faithful to the vow she had made to her beloved, she proved herself a daughter indeed to the old man in his solitude, watching over him with all a daughter's tender care. Sometimes he would call her "Daughter Mary," and say she was feet, and hands, and eyes to him. In his declining years her love was his greatest earthly comfort. It was on her arm he leaned on the day when he went to the ancient church to preach his last sermon; and the last blessing which fell from his lips was pronounced upon her.

And so, like a veteran warrior, the old man laid aside the armour he had worn so long, and went home to his rest. The faith which had made his life so beautiful shone brightest at the close; a sure testimony to those who had watched him depart, that he was entering on his labours, and only exchanging the earthly for a more glorious existence,—the goal on which his eye had been set all the days of his pilgrimage through this "thoroughfare full of woe," wherein

"We be pilgrims passing to and fro."

His death was the precursor of many changes in Glenathole. It was long before the people could reconcile themselves to the new occupant of the Manse, or cease to regard his voice as alien, when on Sabbath they listened to it in the old grey church, which had been for more than half a century identi-

fied in their minds with its revered pastor, "saintly Mr. Dunbar,"

His death told on Mis. Errol, who had depended on him for advice and help in times of perplexity and trouble. So much, indeed, had he entered into her life, that often, after he was gone, she would speak of him in the present tense, as if he was still on earth to render the needed help. "I'll ask Mr. Dunbar," she would frequently say, in some emergency: "he aye kens whaur duty lies." Then, on being reminded that he was dead, she would sigh and repeat to herself: "Ay, ay; he's won hame, he's won hame. I'll follow sune, in God's gude time."

The shadow of her past great sorrow had never disappeared. All who saw her knew she was a broken-hearted woman. During the last years of her life especially, she seemed to live almost wholly in the past; and, though she rarely mentioned his name, her looks and actions plainly declared that it was of her lost son she thought most of all.

Yet she was not forgetful of the claims of the living; indeed it was hardly possible to be so, with Ronald and his wife constantly coming about her. For, true to his word, Ronald abated no jot of his former dutifulness toward his mother and sister; in which exemplary course he was enthusiastically supported by Jessy. And to the fresh claims upon her sympathy the old woman responded as cordially as ever. Jessy would rouse her from her sad reflections as no one else could, making bold to do and say things from which even Mary would have shrunk.

In course of time a yet stronger appeal was made to her sympathy, when Ronald placed a grandchild in her arms, and, while her tears fell on the little unconscious face, told her its name was Kenneth Errol. With trembling lips she blessed it, praying that God would early direct its feet into the right way, which, narrow and thorny though it be, leads at last to Heaven.

Other children were born in Ronald's home, but she did not live to see them. Suddenly, without warning, the messenger of death came to her, and she obeyed the summons fearlessly, almost cheerfully. Life had long been a burden to her, and she was not sorry to lay it down. Faith had drawn aside the dim, mysterious curtain hanging 'twixt the life here and that beyond; and who that e'er attained that glimpse was fain to tarry mid the shadows of time?

Thus, in the desolated home, Mary Errol was left alone save for the faithful Betsy, who still strove to minister to her wants, though in fact much more an object of care than any real help to her mistress.

And was she unhappy?

No: loving hearts need never be empty. It is only the selfish who are soured by sorrow; and only the unloving who are really lonely. It might have been thought that, bereft of every new tie with one exception, Mary Errol would pine with discontent, and shrivel up into a cheerless, loveless old maid, for whom all existing happiness was but a tantalising reminder of what hers might have been. And truly, had no higher influence than the merely human been at work in her heart, such would not have been a very improbable result of the bitter disappointments of her life. But she had learned the secret of real happiness in living for the good of others; a lesson not to be learned by human means.

Nor did she lack scope for the exercise of her noble unselfishness. In addition to the numerous pensioners she had in the village, and the faithful retainer at home whom she loved as a friend, her attention was more and more demanded by the increasing inmates of her brother's home, until Aunt Mary came to be regarded as one of the household. Whenever Jessy's housekeeping came to grief, as it not unfrequently did, Mary was at once sent for to rectify the mischief, and lend the uninitiated financier the benefit of her experience. Indeed on one occasion she was requested to bring Betsy with her to officiate as nurse in room of some rebellious abigail, who had been summarily dismissed from her post.

Yet, while benefiting from the ever ready assistance of her old and tried friend, Jessy did not forget her claims to a fuller happiness than any she could hope to confer upon her; and more than once she strove to shake Mary's constancy. Harry's long cherished attachment was no secret to her, and she advocated his cause with all the persuasive eloquence at her command. But when Mary, with one of her penetrative looks, confronted her with the question: "If Ronald died to-morrow, would you put another in his place, after a few years?" she was silenced, and forbore to urge a step which she herself would not have taken.

And in course of time, as Mary had foretold,

Harry found consolation for his disappointment in the love of another, who caused him no unnecessary importunity in pleading his suit. This lady, the owner of a proud title, was at the same time poor: and malicious tongues whispered that she had married him for pecuniary reasons. But, whatever attractions Harry's prospects might have had for her, there could be no doubt his face had still greater. During the first years of their married life she was remarkable for the proud affection she evinced for her husband. At a later stage her conjugal fondness seemed to cool: and when at last Douglas Castle passed into Harry's hands, and, as was natural, he came to take up his abode permanently in his ancestral home, she frequently left it, to spend the season in London, whose gay circles offered fuller gratification for her tastes than the seclusion of Glenathole

Whether more cogent reasons were accountable for her aversion to the place, remained a secret. Jealous by nature, she had soon probed her husband's secret so far as to assure herself of the existence of a previous attachment on his part; and perhaps she concluded that the object of it haunted the vicinity of Douglas Castle. Be this as it might, she never relaxed her efforts to induce her husband to sell the estate and reside elsewhere. In this design, however, she did not succeed; the utmost concession he would make was to take a house in London for a certain period of the year, leaving her at liberty to remain longer if she chose.

Of this permission she did not subsequently avail herself, for she dreaded any chance revival of that old passion which she had believed to be still smouldering in her husband's breast ever since the significant request made by him on the birth of his only daughter, that she should be called Mary. His sudden blushes when pressed for an explanation of his fondness for that name were sufficiently indicative of guilt to awaken all her lurking jealousy, and induce her rather to remain on watch at Glenathole than enjoy the congenial society of the metropolis.

There was small foundation for her apprehension, however, as Mary Errol scrupulously avoided meeting her former admirer whenever it was possible; and, whatever his own sentiments might have been, he was too honourable a man to seek a renewal of their former intimacy, even under the specious name of friendship.

Whether her prophecy had come true or not, Mary never ascertained. To her he was still, what he had always been, a staunch and generous friend. But, though no hint of it was ever dropped in her presence, hers was the name of all names which to the end of his days possessed a mystic charm for the ear of Harry Douglas.

There was another somewhat bitter ingredient in the cup of Lady Augusta's happiness; this was the ill-masked antipathy of her sister-in-law. At their first meeting, each had had premonitions of inevitable hostility, which proved only too correct eventually. What the reason was, neither could precisely determine, after the manner of the enemies of "Doctor Fell." The melancholy fact was incontestable, that they could never "live peaceably" with each other, and had therefore best live apart. Jessy's fearless candour offended Lady Augusta as much as her ladyship's stately hauteur irritated Jessy. In fact, had it not been for her brother's sake, Mrs. Ronald would have been virtually an exile from her former home.

Even in such a case, however, she would have been tolerably content. Her home was a happy one, and the love which made it so found ample exercise in the care of her children, making her independent of the outer world and all its votaries, her majestic sister-in-law included. Six merry children gamboled round her feet. Of these the eldest had been named after poor Kenneth; the second, a fair-haired child, bore the name of Ada, in memory of that beloved sister of whom all the children had come to think as an angel in a happier place than even their happy home. And one little girl, not unlike Jessy herself, with dark, gleeful eyes and brown curly hair, was called, at her mother's wish, Mary Errol.

When first the subject of Ronald's marriage had been broached, the usual prophecies anent future weal and woe had been unhesitatingly pronounced by charitable prognosticators, on the scanty information generally considered by them sufficient for their purpose; and the bulk of such prophecies had announced as certain, that his wife "would rue the day she took Ronald Errol for her husband," for such an obstinate will and domineering temper must entail misery on the woman who placed herself in his power. A few seers more sagacious than the rest, however, predicted another sequel. He was getting a wife, they said, who would prove

herself a match for him, and meet his wilfulness with a dogged resistance he would fail to combat. Whether of the two predictions came to pass, was pretty much a matter of conjecture to the world outside; but one thing was certain: Ronald Errol improved immensely after his marriage, even to the extent of submitting to the indignity of contradiction without any outburst of fury or menace. He was observed, too, to speak with perceptible deference of his wife's opinion, not only in connection with the trivial affairs of domestic life, but also in reference to the weightier matters of business and pecuniary arrangements—a tribute to her wisdom and prudence, the highest such a man as he could have paid.

Thus had Jessy made good her vow, never to be the wife of a despot. With which assurance the reader must rest content; for the united testimony of those most deeply versed in the mysteries of matrimonial life goes to prove that even this happy state does not yield unmingled bliss. It would therefore be presumptuous to expect or infer exception to such uniform testimony even in the case of Mr. and Mrs. Errol.

We have spoken of their love and kindness toward Mary, and of the place assigned her in their home. That love and kindness continued unabated, and the place was ever ready for her to the close of her life.

But there was another home, to which she was hardly less welcome, and that was the home of Lady Joan, whose deep, instinctive sympathy went out toward one situated so much like herself in the world. "The friendship that had been annealed with tears" proved abiding; and in talking of the loved and lost they found a sweet, though mournful, solace when they met, as they did often, in the old lady's home.

Another solitary pilgrim had found a restingplace there. Clare Douglas came to reside with his aunt after the death of his parents, and remained as long as she lived, patiently pursuing the studies he loved, and sending forth into the world in the form of many an inspiring verse the fruits he had reaped mid weariness and pain.

It was after her return from one of those visits to her old friend that Mary betook herself, as she loved to do, to the quiet churchyard where reposed the dust of those she still held dear. It had always been a pleasure to wander among those treasured graves, and think of the time when she would see once more the faces whose smiles had gladdened her in the days gone by. On this summer evening a sweet peacefulness seemed to brood over the spot, whose influence fell on her spirit like balm. On she walked along the oft-trodden path, until an object new and strange arrested her; but the startled look of pain gave place to one of tender emotion when she beheld, instead of the stone she had washed so often with her tears, a pure white marble pillar, on whose base were engraven the words:—

ERECTED BY BERTRAM NORTON

IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF THE LOVE AND LIFE OF RAYMOND DUNBAR,



LINES.

In the long dead days of yore,
Ere the spring had passed away,
Ere the sky had turned to grey,
When all life lay on before,
Love came to me and sighed,
And softly laid them down,
His bow, his lyre and crown,
On the green grass at my side.

I but laughed and turned away; Love bowed his head and wept, Then from me swiftly stept, Into the dying day; But I shall keep them still, His bow, his lyre and crown, Once on the turf laid down, Till love his pledge fulfil.

P. B. Symonds.



I T will perhaps seem an anomaly to associate the Law with sunny lawns and "trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon for simple sheep." The name alone conjures up visions of musty deeds, sable-clad attorneys, and smoke-begrimed tenements. It is connected in the infant mind with notices to keep off the grass, and fines for picking flowers; in the adult brain with arid wastes of legal shibboleth and sinuous stifling codicils. Yet the fact remains that we Londoners owe some of our greenest pastures and most legend-haunted byeways to the followers of the blind goddess.

The Inns of Courts have been called "the

noblest nurseries of humanity and liberty in the kingdom," and may we not add, of poetry and romance, as breathed by hushed cloisters, lichened walls, and dim-lit chapels. There are four principal Inns, those of the Inner and Middle Temple, Gray's Inn and Lincoln's Inn. The name is derived from their being originally held in the Aula Regia or Court of the King's Palace. Together with these are the Inns of Chancery, which may be classed in this article under the general heading.

In paying a brief visit to the six most picturesque of these legal centres, let us commence at the river-



side, where the long sweep of the Temple Gardens makes such a charming break in the great brick city. It is a place to dream in; to moralise upon the decay of the white-robed knights under the deadly spell of the god Mammon; to listen to the noisy revels of the law students who usurped the places of the haughty Templars; to watch the courtly Chaucer pass in converse with the graver Gower. Here grew the immortal briers from which were plucked the emblems of Yorkist and Lancastrian. All will remember the prophecy of Warwick in Henry VI.:

Buildings, but, becoming proud and

wealthy, they desired nobler lodgings. Hence arose a vast monastery between the Thames and Fleet Street, with terraces and gardens, a superb church to the Virgin, a barrack, priory, and long rows of cloisters. Small wonder that these sun-baked warriors preferred the leisured ease of these shaded walks to the broiling plains and the exquisite expression of Saracen fury. At first the rules were strictly austere and devotional: prayer, fasting, mortification of the flesh, and perpetual service were the routine of each day. Silence was enjoined at meals and on retiring to rest, which could only be broken when signs were inadequate to express some special need. An idle or foolish speech was to be followed by a repetition of the Lord's Prayer. Then came the crucial test of prosperity—an ordeal too severe, as it was later on for the learned Dominican and the lowly follower of St. Francis. Their arrogance and profligacy shocked the pious, their great possessions aroused the greedy; they were charged with the crudest idolatry and suffered the bitterest of persecution, until a papal mandate abolished the order at the opening of the four-teenth century.

Many of the old customs were retained by the students of Common Law who were allowed to settle in the deserted tenements by the King's cousin, Earl of Lancaster. The appointment of serjeants-at-law was identical with that of creating the Fratres Servientes, the modern coif being a survival of the linen one worn by those ancient officers. The old retainers remained to wait on their new masters; the serving-men were still known as paniers; while such customs as dining in pairs, the punishment of misconduct by expulsion, and the styling of the Common Plea Judges as "Knights," were kept up. When the Society became congested, it separated into two Halls, whence arose the custom still in vogue of the Benchers in the one Hall entertaining once a year the members of the other.

When Wat Tyler led his vast following through London, a special animus was shown against the legal colony both as being the makers of unjust laws, and as the tenants of the equally detested Knights Hospitallers. Their amiable intention was to relieve every lawyer in the metropolis of his head and start afresh; but they contented themselves with destroying their dwellings, and burning deeds, books, and rolls of remembrance in Fleet Street.

Even in these remote times the profession was looked upon as one of repute, the students being of good birth and ample means. Indeed, the costly nature of the curriculum made this necessary, for the annual expenditure of each in the reign of Henry VI. was computed at the equivalent of £450 in our present money. A stricter surveillance was maintained over the youngsters than is at present exercised in our universities: not only was their moral attitude closely observed, but also their

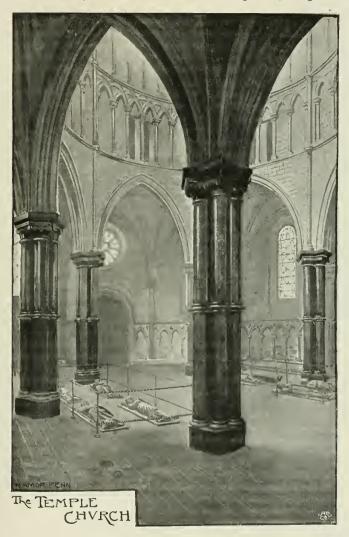
dress and outward semblance. Thus in the early reign of Bluff King Hal a fine of six-and-eightpence was imposed on the exercise of such plays as "shove-grote" and "slyp-grote," and an interdict was put upon long beards. Later on they were forbidden to don swords, daggers, Spanish cloaks or hats: only their betters were permitted the luxuries of velvet caps, white jerkins, buskins, shirt-cups, feathers, &c.

But despite these restrictions, the calling remained popular, for in the same reign large blocks of new buildings were added for the students' accommodation, among these being Pakington's Rents, and Tanfield Court. Two of the most noticeable structures still standing are the Middle Temple Hall and the Church. In the roof of the former may be seen the most perfect specimen of Elizabethan architecture that London can boast of. The Hall has the distinction of being the scene of the first performance of Twelfth Night. A contemporary barrister yelept Manningham thus records the historic event:-"Feb. 2, 1601 (2)-At our feast we had a play called Twelve Night, or What you will, much like the Comedy of Errors or Menæchini in Plautus, but most like & neere to that in Italian called Inganni." The more sacred edifice is the best example we have of the round church, there being only four at present standing in England. Its graceful Gothic arches and clustered columns are now shown in their simple beauty, being shorn of the ugly wainscoting with which vandalism had choked up the base until the present century. The mail-clad effigies still proclaim the glory of the Marshalls-William, the great Protector during the minority of Henry III., who helped us to Magna Charta and drove out the French foe: his son, William, conqueror of Llewellyn and his wild Welshmen; and the hapless Gilbert, killed at a tourney, he who is treading out a winged dragon while he unsheathes his sword.

One might collate a volume of romances connected with the Temple and still have much to say: every court, every narrow, crooked lane has a history of its own. Think of only a few names—Christopher Hatton, Wycherley and Congreve, Selden, Littleton, Jeffries, Raleigh, Goldsmith, Cowper, Burke, Sheridan, Eldon—but let us hurry on before the temptation becomes irresistible.

Crossing Fleet Street, we come to the oldest of the Chancery Inns, Clifford's Inn, originally the town-house of the earls of that name. It came counties in England." In the hall is preserved an into note when the six attorneys of the Marshalsea

old oak folding screen, dating from the time of



Court resided there. An authority says: "I should say that more misery emanated from this small spot than from any one of the most populous Henry VIII., on which are set forth, in now almost illegible letters, the forty-seven rules of the institution. This chamber was selected for the adjudi-



cating of the claims of householders and tenants after the Great Fire, when the agonies of fixing old boundaries, now lost under tons of dibris, were deputed to Sir Mathew Hale and seventeen other judges. The results of their investigations may be read in forty heavy folio volumes at the British Museum.

Among the curious survivals of the past is the quaint after-dinner custom continued at Clifford's Inn. There are two sections in the Society—the Principal and Aules, and the Juniors or "Kentish Men." At the end of the repast, the chairman of the latter rises, amid profound silence, and bends to the Principal; then a waiter hands him four small rolls of bread, which he proceeds to fling three times on the table, after which he pushes them down the board to be removed. A very dis-

cerning savant has traced some connection between this mysterious ceremony and Ceres, the first patroness of Law.

Among the notabilities of Clifford's Inn is that learned old antiquary, George Dyer, friend of "Elia," and editor of the extensive Delphin Classics for Valpy. Lamb tells, in his Essays, how the absent-minded scholar walked from his companion's door, in Colebrooke Row, straight into the New River, whence he was extracted, and restored with brandy-andwater. Robert Pultock, the author of "Peter Wilkins," also lived here. This curious, littleknown work suggested "The Curse of Kehama" to Southey, and is coupled in laudatory terms with "Robinson Crusoe" by the critical judgment of Coleridge.

Another inn of Chancery, further north, is Barnard's Inn, a quaint little sanctuary from the roar of traffic. It was formerly known as Mackworth Inn, after the Dean of Lincoln, who held it in the reign of the sixth Henry. That its importance, in a legal sense, has decreased is shown by the fact that in 1855 its total membership numbered only eighteen, as compared with the one hundred and thirty-six students of Queen Bess's time. To Barnard's we owe some further knowledge of our ancestors' ideas on temperance. In 1706 an order was issued fixing two quarts as the allowance of wine to be allotted to each mess of four students during the solemnities of "initiation," this being over and above the liberal allowance of alcohol allotted in the usual way.

In size the old hall is the smallest of any in the London Inns, but it has many objects of interest, among these being portraits of Lords Burleigh, Bacon, and Coventry, and a full-length representation of its whilom principal, Lord Chief Justice Holt. Its proximity to Langdale's distillery nearly robbed us of this charming old Inn, for it became the object of one of those savage attacks which have given an unmerited importance to the Gordon

rioters. The mob fired the building, and rolled intoxicated in the streams of spirit which flowed down the gutters. Some of the chambers attached to Barnard's were partly destroyed, but happily the Inn itself escaped injury.

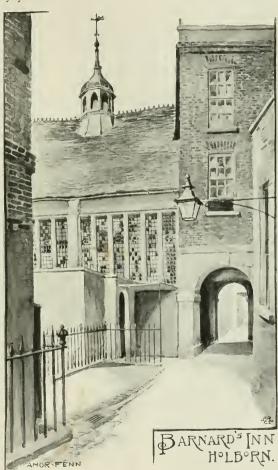
Here dwelt, some seventy years ago, Peter Woulfe, F.R.S., who has been called "the last true believer in alchemy." His rooms were combered with every conceivable apparatus for his art: it was difficult to make one's way to the fireplace. He would appeal to Providence to aid his efforts by hanging up written prayers, and attributed his continued failure to find the elixir to the insufficiency of these supplications and of his charitable deeds. His only remedy for illness was a journey on a coach to Edinburgh and back; and it was the exposure on one of these excur-

sions which cut short the harmless old gentleman's career.

One of the oldest and most picturesque bits of London is the row of gabled houses facing the Gray's Inn Road; its quaint beauty is enhanced by the utterly bourgeois surroundings of Holborn. Passing through the heavy wooden gates, we come into the charming old-world courtyard of Staple Inn. The name is derived from its having anciently been a hostel for the wool merchants. The hall is also

worthy of notice, with its open timber roof and armorial glass windows, the dates on some of the latter recording the year 1500. At the upper end are represented the arms of the Inn in the form of a woolsack. Among the portraits, the most noticeable are those of Charles II., Queen Anne, the Earl of Macclesfield, and the legal lords Cowper and Camden.

Staple Inn
possesses the
additional
lustre of having
housed Dr.
Johnson when
the Gough
Square household was dismembered.
The following
letter of March
23rd, 1759, is
addressed to



Miss Porter :-

"Dear Madam,—I beg your pardon for having so long omitted to write. One thing or other has put me off. I have this day moved my things, and you are now to direct to me at Staple Inn,



London. I am going to publish a little story-book, which I will send you when it is out. Write to me, my dearest girl, for I am always glad to hear from you,—I am, my dear, your humble servant, Sam. Johnson."

The story referred to was "Rasselas" itself, which had been composed in order to meet the expenses of his mother's funeral and settle her remaining liabilities. He told Sir Joshua that the writing of it occupied him during the evenings of one week, each day's work being sent to the printers as it was turned off, and never being read

again. He received in all the sum of £125 from his publishers for it.

On the northern side of Holborn stretch the more important, if less picturesque, courts of Gray's Inn-the fourth in status and extent. For interest it owes more to its associations than to its exterior attractions. The gardens are dull and formal; the buildings flat and dingy; the surroundings most squalid. Far different was it when, in Mr. Spectator's days, the walks formed a fashionable rendezvous, where an uninterrupted view of the green woods at Highgate and Hampstead gladdened the brickwearied eye. It was here that the inquisitive Pepys came to revel in the charms of fair Fanny Butler, and here Addison speaks of Sir Roger de Coverley as "hemming twice or thrice to himself with great vigour, for he loves to clear his pipes in good air (to make

use of his own phrase), and is not a little pleased with any one who takes notice of the strength which he still exerts in his morning

The Chapel of Gray's Inn has no historical associations, being a latter-day erection, but full compensation for its modernity is found in the Hall, which almost rivals that of Middle Temple. It was commenced in the reign of sanguinary Mary, and was finished in that of her successor, the total cost amounting to £863 ros. 8d. Its gorgeously-coloured windows are rich with the arms of the more noteworthy legal luminaries of the Inn—such as Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lords Burleigh and Verulam. The oak roof, with its arched and moulded Gothic ribs, is particularly fine. There are also portraits of the Stuart kings and other great patrons of Gray's.

The history of Gray's Inn is as lengthy as it is illustrious. It would really be an easier task to mention the great personages who had not in some



way been connected with it. Queen Bess has so far stamped her memory on the Benchers that the only regular toast which is perpetuated in the Hall is in her honour. The masques in connection with the Prince of Purpoole's revel were quite a feature of the Elizabethan pageantry. All the great nobility flocked to witness them, and the royal lady herself expressed her pleasure in Gray's Inn as "an house she was much indebted to, for it did always

study for some sport to present unto her." Thomas Cromwell gained the gentle art of lawful brigandage here; the great Burleigh was also a student, and one night gambled away not only his money, but his books and bedding, which, being a married man, was altogether indefensible. However, in the dead of night he bored a hole through his companion's wall and denounced him in such a terrible voice that the wretched man thought it a super-



natural warning; so the next day he came in fear and contrition to Burleigh, asking his pardon, and restoring all he had mulcted him of. Francis Bacon, when the waters of tribulation were passing over him, returned from the splendour of York House to his old chambers to die. Very different was this coming home to the magnificent pomp of his procession thence to Westminster Hall, when the Queen sent the lords of her household to wait upon him. His chambers in Coney Court were on the site of the present western side of Gray's Inn Square. The old custom of including a

legal knowledge in the training of churchmen has also brought many of the great ecclesiastics into association with the Inn. Among these was Bishop Gardner, whose serpentine diplomacy gave rise to the saying, "My Lord of Winchester is like Hebrew, to be read backwards."

In contrast to the dull bareness of Gray's Inn, it is pleasant to let the eye rest on the ruddy

warmth of Lincoln's Inn, which has come straight to us with all its early Tudor grace unmarred by the usual additions of decadent art. The gateway which abuts on Chancery Lane dates from the days

of Henry of Richmond-and still bears the arms of the Earls of Lincoln, whose town palace it originally was; the chapel is a beautiful specimen of Inigo Iones's work, the wood carving and stained-glass windows being especially beautiful. Ben Ionson is said to have worked with a trowel at the erection of the building. On the western side lies the beautiful open space of the Fields, with its proudly nodding trees and soft turf. One can hardly realise that so eminently respectable a spot could have once been notorious as

the haunt of "mumpers" and "rufflers"; yet in the last century this, the headquarters of the Law, was one of the most lawless spots in London.

Thus Gay says :-

"Where Lincoln's Inn's wide space is railed around, Cross not with venturous step: there oft is found The lurking thief, who, while the daylight shone, Made the walls echo with his begging tone."



In 1683 the Fields were the scene of the judicial murder of the stainless Lord William Russell, a. victim of the brutal Teffries. No. 21 Old Buildings has a peculiar interest attached to it as being the chambers of Secretary Thurloe. where he was much visited by the Iron Protector. A story is told of how Oliver came here to discuss with his satellite a plan for seizing the roval princes; he failed at first to notice a sleeping clerk. but on making the discovery, drew his dagger, and was with

difficulty prevented from finishing the youthful career. It was this same stripling who divulged the plot to the Royalists. Many years after the "Thurloe Papers" were discovered in these rooms behind a false ceiling.





A PROVINCIAL SCHOOL OF ART.

By Ella Jefferiss.

UR School of Art is up in the top storey of the Technical Institute, and from our large lofty windows we can look down on the multitude of daffodils nodding in the sun round the cathedral, or we can look into the Guildhall Council Chamber and watch the Mayor and Corporation of Medchester in Counsel, or far away to the north, where is a forest of cementwork chimneys, and coming down the river are the brown-sailed barges, so cement-laden that only about an inch of hull appears above the water. Far down below us we can hear the hum of farmers talking in the narrow old street, for it is market day. Occasionally a cart rattles past and our old model, the rosycheeked shrimp woman, is calling: "Shrimps, shrimps, ladies; nice shrimps to-day" - only she says, "Srimps to-dy." All the afternoon, since three o'clock, the drowsy cathedral bell has been going ding-dong, ding-dong, until after a final ten minutes of ding-ding, ding-ding, it stops, and the sun is shining on Clytie upon the shelf, and we know it is time to put our easel in the corner by the Venus, and go home to tea, or, as we are coming back to the evening class, to the baker's shop under the Corn Exchange clock, where tea and roll is fivepence.

We Medchester art students are a dreamy set. The air of Medchester is conducive to dreaminess and drowsiness. We study up here in the big art-room above the chimney-pots, some of us all day long, placidly painting and shading in time to the cathedral bells. Venus

and the dancing fawn, and Apollo and Clytic, stand gazing down on us by day, and keeping guard by night over the smaller deities, the ghastly white casts and the grinning skull which makes such a good bit of still life, and which, in various combinations with old books, rosaries, and hour glasses, hangs in every drawing-room in every Medchester house containing artistic daughters. Besides the skull and the easts and easels and canvasses and drawing-boards, we have, by way of "properties," an ancient sword, and some antimacassars for drapery; a gobelin blue one, always used by the people who paint daffodils; a grey one, which is but little in favour, although a great favourite with our master; and a red one for ladies who like "a nice bit of warm colour." We once had a Dutch cheese, presented by a student when she had finished painting it. Alas! that cheese was left in the cabinet with the vases and other articles of virtu, and when we came back after the long summer vacation, and Mr. Brown opened the eabinet door-but I draw a veil. That cabinet will never lose the peculiar and pungent odour of that frightful cheese. High up on the top of the cabinet among the dust we have a stable lanthorn, ancient and battered, and a cowboy's hat, and in the cabinet we keep our vases. Like the drapery the selection of these is limited in number and design, and we have painted them all so often, and in so many different positions and connections, and as receptacles for so

many different flowers, that for the rest of our life we shall be able to paint from memory that æsthetic blue vase with the slender neck which always goes with the yellow antimacassar, and we know exactly where the white splash comes on the green Dutch jug. Sometimes we bring movable, and also removable, still life by way of change from vases. It has generally to be fenced round with innumerable warnings, such as, "Please not take away these grapes;" "On no account remove this apple; " " Kindly do not take these bananas until they go black." Someone brought a live crab once, and the poor thing had to be chained up to a head of Socrates to keep it from running away. One July an ardent student brought a couple of mackerels in the morning, and by the afternoon there was a rebellion, for it was a hot day.

One day, when we go home in the evening after one of our peaceful, placid days at the school of art, we hear that our old friend, who went to study art in London, has got a picture in the Academy; another school-friend has got her B.A.; and we--? We suddenly realise that three years ago we left school; for three years we have been painting here in time to the Cathedral bells; and yet it has only seemed like a few months. We have been enchanted here amongst the gods and goddesses and gobelin blue pots. We are studying art and dreaming away our life, for it is a dangerous thing to study art in a provincial town. So, pleasantly, lazily, drowsily, we go on, mixing madder pink, and washing in grey backgrounds to these masses of wall-flowers and buttercups and roses, which so much fascinate us that if we do not shake off the enchantment, and ask ourselves: "What is it all coming to?" we shall awake one day and find ourselves old but not vet artists.

We have had three prodigies (to us) in our school — wonderful performers whose past works, adorning our walls, still keep their memory green in our minds, and are spoken of with admiring awe by young students, and of whom we older ones boast that we once actually worked at the same model with them. Alas!

There was Gifford, a plodding, quiet, little fellow, who worked straight through his South Kensington exams., from freehand to painting from the life, by the time he was twenty-two. He got a South Kensington scholarship, and went to London, where our master proudly tells us he is making a name for himself at "black and white."

Then there was De Rainly. He was never quite as one of us: he would not go in for exams., and had disturbing new theories on the subject of chalk-work. De Rainly went to Paris, and is now in London, whence he occasionally swoops down upon us like some bright comet, electrifying our Cathedral-city brain with his impressionist water-colour sketches and clever pen-and-ink work, and scandalising us with his studies from the nude. De Rainly never took to the spirit-clogging medium of oil.

Our third star was Miss Boulter. She is only a mistress in an art school, but she once had a picture bought by the Prince of Wales. That picture and its buyer were our subject for conversation on class days for the remainder of the session.

I think the population of our school of art may be divided into three classes. First, there are the ladies who come to the Wednesday and Saturday morning lessons, and pay the highest fees. These ladies are select, and are quite the crême de la crême of Medchester. A class for ladies only this, no gentlemen allowed. There are the Archdeacon's elderly and badly-dressed daughters (for the higher you are from a social point of view, the worse you dress, in Medchester); there is the daughter of a retired general, and the widow of a canon. All told, there are about six of this goodly company. These ladies impress on the master that they do not wish to be called students. They simply want to take up painting as a pastime, and they would like to commence on the life model, full size in oil (draped). They consider it quite unnecessary to start their art education with plebeian freehand and model drawing, or shading in black-andwhite. Now our master is a shy diffident man, considerably younger than some of his morning pupils, and all he can dare to do by way of curbing their ambitious flights is to suggest in the mildest possible manner that perhaps it would be advisable to do one or two "antiques" in sepia before starting on the life model in

colours, just, of course, to get into the way of it. "Oh, yes, Mr. Brown," they agree, "if you think it would be better we do not mind doing a few, just to get into the way of it." Mr. Brown would laugh to scorn any fairly advanced evening student who would dare suggest working from the life until he had at least a couple of years' hard preparation work. That these ambitious ladies ought to have spent years at a course of outline drawing from the flat and from models, followed by light and shade work, and a long apprenticeship at the "antique," is, of course, a mere detail; and after they have hurried through the "one or two sepia studies," they begin the oil painting of the model, full size in colours, Mr. Brown doing most of the mere drawing of features, &c. "The colour, of course, is everything," and that the ladies do themselves.

Then there are the young ladies who attend the afternoon classes, and, for the most part, paint from copies. They do not aspire to the life. Landscape and flower copies are their special line. They do not want to study art: they want to make some pretty pictures for the drawing-room at home. They generally go in largely for "oils" as having "more to show for one's work, you know." They sometimes bring tambourines and milking-stools to decorate, and poor Mr. Brown sighs hopelessly. They spend a long time over the copy drawer, looking for something "sweetly pretty," and they chatter a great deal, and make matches between Mr. Brown and every marriageable lady in the town. Once they used to have afternoon tea, which left very little time for painting, but since the "student" element has increased of late, this has been given up. They all compliment each other on their paintings, and say they are sweetly pretty; and they are all very pleasant amiable girls, for the most part nice-looking and prettily dressed. Some of their painting aprons are so dainty it seems a pity that the painting could not be abolished in favour of just the aprons and the afternoon tea. Sometimes by continuous persuasion and long argument and the example of others, these young ladies are won over to the ranks of the students, and martyrdom—namely, severe black and white studies, "antique" interminable, and exams., and no pretty copies of "roses," or "scenes on the Thames," or "sparrows' eggs in a nest."

Last of all are the students proper. These come to all the classes, and are of both sexes, for I regret to say that the "dabbler" contingent consists entirely of women. If men come at all they come to work as students. The students come to the school with the conscientious purpose of studying art, although with what ultimate results many of them are uncertain. They follow the advice of Mr. Brown, which means they go in for exams., starting at freehand and working away through these innumerable South Kensington Examinations which every art student knows so well. A few get through the exams, quickly and become teachers, others go so far and get tired, and only a very few of those patient ones who come to all the classes, and sit all day long between times in the empty rooms, peacefully and patiently painting, ever become artists, in the sense in which the world calls any one an artist, any more than do the dilletantes, the dabblers, who simply come to pass away a pleasant hour among their friends.





THE GIRTON GIRL.

By E. NESRIT.

ISS WENTWORTH was handsome and learned. She was the show-flower of a singularly good-looking family, and she had achieved what her friends called "something wonderful" at Girton. She had strong views on the subject of Women's Rights, but her programme of rights did not concern itself much with political privilege and the vote.

"The right not to marry is what we want," she used to say; "the right to live our own lives, and do our own work, and go in for our own subjects, without setting everybody chattering and pitying. It is revolting to hear them! A girl who doesn't succeed in getting a situation as domestic slave is spoken of as a failure. I shall never marry. And if a few more girls with decent brains and passable faces would be sensible too, we should soon show the world that it is possible for a woman to prefer some other profession to marriage. Now, they think if a girl isn't married, that it is because she has not had the chance!"

So Miss Wentworth expressed her views—and alienated the sympathy of her relations by her refusal of one eligible match after another. The refusals cost her nothing, and she gave them gracefully. Practice makes perfect—in this as in other arts—and she had plenty of practice. For she was no mere book-worm, but a healthy young girl, with all a natural girl's tastes—or all but one. She rode, she sang, she swam, she danced, she played tennis, she could pull an oar or a trigger with strength and accuracy—she could construe one of the hardest bits of Æschylus, and could prune a

fruit-tree with equal grace and readiness. But one thing she never did—she never flirted. And yet, in spite—or perhaps, because—of this omission, desirable lovers continued to fall at her feet.

Miss Wentworth was, as old novelists would have said, no longer in the bloom of her first youth—that is to say she was nearly twenty-three, when she and Lavinia Selwyn decided to spend a summer month at Elmering—a month of reading and bathing and sunny quiet. Elmering is the only quiet seaside place on the south coast. That is why I call it Elmering: its real name is something quite different. There is one old-timbered farmhouse where the folks take in summer boarders, and an inn where sometimes a stray visitor puts up for a day or two. Beyond that, only fishermen's cottages and the trim, white-washed coast-guard station.

"How lovely it is," Lavinia said, on the first morning, putting her curly head out of the window, among the honeysuckle and jasmine that covered one side of this ideal house. "Isn't it delicious, Laura?"

"I suppose it is," Laura answered, from the shady depths of the chintz-covered arm-chair, "but I can't feel it yet. Don't you know someone says, 'As people are not quite gone when they go, so they are not quite come when they arrive'—and the country is the same. One feels that it is a stranger when one comes back to it, after months of town."

"Oh, Laura, how funny you are!"

This was Lavinia's most frequent comment

on her friend's utterances. Their friendship was based on the secure foundation of a few common tastes and a complete dissimilarity of character.

"How peaceful it is—look at the red light on the old church, and the soft, browny-green of the elms. The quiet seems to wrap you round like loving arms." So spoke Miss Wentworth on the third morning.

"How funny you are!" rejoined Miss Selwyn. "It is lovely, certainly, but it's the least bit dull—isn't it? Oh, not for you, because you have your books and things—"

"If you're dull here, Vynie," said her friend sternly, "I give you up."

"Oh not really-only I do wish I were as clever as you."

"I'm very glad you're not," was the superb reply; but the insolence was not resented—for how can you resent an insult that comes to you with a kiss and a pat on your shoulder?

"If you were"—she broke off, for Mrs. Haynes came in with a card held between finger and thumb. Laura read: "Mr. Peke."

"A gentleman to see you, Miss," she said; and I regret to say that Miss Wentworth said; "Oh bother!"

Perhaps the words had travelled through the open door, for the man who came in a moment after wore on his handsome face a look of politely-veiled amusement.

"I am a Vandal to invade your country quiet like this; but when your brother heard that I was coming here to do some reading, nothing would serve but I must promise to call on you. My conscience troubled me, I own, but it had no chance, of course, and here I am. I hope you will forgive me."

LauraWentworth, conscious of the amusement in his face, flushed crimson, and murmured something banal about "any friend of Harold's,"

But Lavinia's face had changed—she looked three times as pretty as she had done three minutes before. Such miracles can a strange young man accomplish.

Laura recovered her self-possession almost at once, and the call was a long one, ending with tea in the arbour. Mrs. Haynes, on whom Laura had cast her spell, brought out the best tea-things, and the party were merry. "Harold himself means to run down for a day or two'soon," said Harold's friend; and again, but this time to herself alone, Harold's sister murmured, "Oh bother."

"What a fool I was," she said to herself afterwards, when the guest had gone, and Mrs. Haynes, with breathless care, was washing up the best china. "What a fool I was to bring Vynie, I might have known that Harold would not keep away. And I to be chaperone! Or rather, I suppose I am to pair off with this Peke person. Oh Harold, I'll be even with you yet for this! Oh, my poor pretty little holiday! All spoiled. 'Ah, now for ever farewell the tranquil mind, farewell content!' The Peke bore will fall in love with me probably that's Harold's idea-of course," And for the third time the Lady from Girton ejaculated, "Oh bother!" for all the world as though she had been an ordinary, uneducated girl.

But as the days went on Miss Wentworth was forced to confess that the new-comer showed none of the signs she knew so well: and if you have an acquaintance with a person in a place like Elmering, you are bound to see a good deal' of that person. On the beach, in the village street, in the lanes behind the village, you are always meeting that person. So it came about that the three visitors spent a good part of each day together. Mr. Charles Peke was always what Harold called "the hoighth of company." He was a good talker, and was ready with all those little attentions despised by no woman, however emancipated. But his attentions were almost impartially bestowed and, indeed, if either lady received the larger share of his petits soins, it was not the beautiful Miss Wentworth, but pretty Lavinia Selwyn.

The three went for walks together, sat on the beach together, had tea and dinner together on half the days of the week, and they discussed all things in heaven and earth—that is to say, Laura and Mr. Peke discussed them—and Lavinia from time to time broke in on their arguments with fascinating irrelevance. She could bear even metaphysics—if a handsome young man were one of the disputants.

It was on a hot, breathless blue day, when the three were sitting on the pebble ridge looking out to sea, that for the first time was raised between them the question of marriage—marriage in the abstract, of course, not the concrete.

It rose out of the account of a smart wedding where Miss Selwyn's cousin had been a bridesmaid. There were stiffly illustrated accounts in all the ladies' papers, and a sheaf of these lay on Miss Selwyn's lap—and upon the sunwarmed pebbles at her side.

"I have no patience with that kind of folly," said Miss Wentworth, suddenly. She had halfa-dozen round pebbles in her hand, and as she spoke she aimed them, one after the other, at an oyster-shell that reared its white boss above the wet shingle edge below. "As if it were not bad enough for a girl to sell herself into degrading slavery, without herrelations making as much fuss as though she had won the Victoria Cross."

"Or taken a first-class," said Peke, gravely.

"Nellie hasn't sold herself into slavery, really, Mr. Peke," said Lavinia. "That's only Laura's way of talking."

"Oh—I don't mean, of course, that Nellie's making a mercenary marriage. Lord Farleigh happens to be rich, and to be Lord Farleigh

But she wished to marry him last year, when he was only a penniless younger son."

"I told you she didn't mean it," Lavinia put in.

"That only makes it worse in my opinion," Miss Wentworth went on, throwing up her pretty chin; "if she had married in order to carry out her theories with his money—she's a rabid humanitarian—one could have excused her. She marries for pure sentiment; gives up her individuality, her own career, just because she happens to——"

"Because she happens to be in love with him, I suppose."

"In love!" Contempt, or some more occult emotion, sharpened her tone. "Oh, I am so tired of hearing that poor word put to all sorts of uses it can't fulfil. I don't believe in love, in that sense—the love that makes people blind and idiotic. I believe in friendship and affection, of course, but—"

"But somebody must marry," hazarded Lavinia.

"Well, let the stupid people do it there are plenty of them, goodness knows!"

"That's a poor look out for the future of the race," said Peke, slowly.

"She is dreadful," said Lavinia, "but I always tell her her turn will come, and then she'll see."

Miss Wentworth frowned, and to Lavinia's amazement, blushed crimson. Peke hastened to turn the talk to the impersonal.

"For my part," he said, "I am old-fashioned enough to believe in love, and to believe, too, that true love is the only justification for marriage."

"You admit that it needs justification?"

"Nothing can justify it — but love," he answered. "Love is the power that moves the world,"

"Nothing can justify it but folly," said Laura, jumping up, and speaking in a tone quite removed from her usual calm reasonableness. "I'm going in to do an hour's reading. Don't be late for lunch, Vynie."

And she walked away across the rattling pebbles.

"Is Miss Wentworth really serious?" asked the young man, nonchalantly—tilting his straw hat over his eyes.

"Indeed she is."

"But you don't agree with her?"

"Of course I don't!" cried Lavinia, "she's the dearest girl, but she's as mad as a March hare on that particular point."

Charles Peke moved a foot or two nearer to her.

"Miss Selwyn," he said, "I am disposed to tell you a secret."

Lavinia's heart gave a little flutter—was it possible that——but the next moment it sank to the sound of his words.

"I love Miss Wentworth—and till this moment I thought I had a chance—just the chance any decent fellow might have—of winning her."

"Well, you haven't," Lavinia answered briskly—her wounded vanity demanded vengeance for that heart-leap and that instant of foolish expectancy—"no one has a chance—and you least of all—she can't bear you!—Do you know what she said when Mrs. Haynes brought your card in?"

"She said, 'Oh, bother'!"

"Well, she meant it, and she means it still. She only wishes you'd go away and leave her in peace to work."

"Did she say so?"

"Yes."

(So she did, but that was two weeks ago, Lavinia.)

"I'll go to-morrow," he said, and, turning, left her without another word. Then Lavinia was sorry—a little.

The bathing at Elmering is dependent on the tides. The tide was high that afternoon, and the girls bathed at four o'clock.

From the shelter of their tent they could see, far down the beach, the white tent belonging to the inn—whence Mr. Peke took his swim. As they went down into the blue clearness of the water, they saw his dark head, a little speck making out to sea a couple of hundred yards down the beach. Laura was a magnificent swimmer, but this afternoon she did not go out far; she busied herself in trying to teach Lavinia that it is impossible to swim with one foot furtively seeking the support of the sand. Lavinia grew cold, and went back to the tent, while Laura lay in the shallow water, letting the waves break over her.

"What a long way out Mr. Peke has gone," called Lavinia from the tent.

And before Laura could answer, a faint cry came across the sea. Laura sat up and listened. Again it came. Faint but unmistakable. A cry for help.

"It's Mr. Peke," Lavinia cried. "Oh, Laura!"

She came out of the tent—dressed save for her shoes—her hair loose on her shoulders.

"Run home—bring Haynes and his wife and some blankets," said Laura very quickly and very quietly. "He is hurt. I shall swim out to him."

"Oh, Laura, you'll be drowned, don't -- "

But Laura had turned and was running along the sand in her blue bathing dress, with her long bright hair streaming behind her.

Lavinia followed.

"Oh, Laura, you'll both be drowned!" she cried, catching her up and running beside her. "Oh, Laura, perhaps he's trying to drown himself, and he'll drown you if you go out!"

"Don't be so idiotic," said Laura, still running towards the point of the beach opposite which, far out to sea, she could see the dark head drifting, drifting.

"Laura, he's in love with you," panted Lavinia; "he told me so—and—1—told—him—you didn't like him. Perhaps it's despair."

Laura never stopped, but she threw over her shoulder a look at her friend, a look whose like that friend prays never to see again.

"You said that you dared?"

"Forgive me, I didn't know," gasped the other for she knew now.

"If I save him, I'll forgive you: if not, I'll never forgive you as long as I live or after." So saying, Miss Wentworth made three steps through the shallow water, plunged forward, and swam out to sea. She swam swiftly and steadily, changing her stroke frequently, and saving her strength as much as might be. As she rose on the crest of the wide waves, she saw the dark head—so far, so very far, away. She seemed to get no nearer. Swimming with a strong side stroke she glanced back towards the beach, and saw Lavinia still standing there.

"Go!" she cried, and waved her arm. Then Lavinia seemed to remember her errand and went

"Another wave—another. The breast-stroke now. I must not lose my head. Thank God, the tide is bringing him this way! And he may be dead when I reach him. Yet he doesn't sink. What is it? Oh, what has happened! The side-stroke now."

She cut through the deep water like a blue water-snake nearer—nearer. She could see now that he was floating.

"Keep up!" she shouted, "I'm coming!"
He raised a hand to show that he heard,

Three more strokes—now two one—the last. She was close beside him. His face was ghastly white—his eyes half shut—his body in its black bathing-suit lay inert upon the heaving bosom of the sea; a cry broke from her as she saw that the water about him was tinged with blood. One foot was crossed over the other—on the knee thus supported was a gaping wound.

"Oh, God help me!" she cried, and at her voice he opened his eyes,

"Are we far from shore"—his voice was faint.

"A good way."

"Can you take me in?"

"I don't know. I'm here to try."

"It was a rock. I ought to have remembered. I think my leg's broken."

"All right, lie still. I'll manage."

She took off the sash of her bathing-dress, and made it fast round him below his arms.

"You'll be drowned. Oh, leave me. Go!" he said.

"Lie still," she answered.

She took the end of the sash in one hand and with the other made a stroke. It would not do. Then she tied the other end of the sash round her own waist, and this time found that she moved more easily. But oh, it was hard work, and the shore so far away. Still husbanding her strength, she swam slowly towards the shore. Every now and then she stopped and floated for a moment to rest.

"Leave me, save yourself—oh, my darling, you must." His voice ceased suddenly.

And now she saw that his eyes had closed, and that the water, after each stroke of her's, washed over his face. He had fainted. The burden was heavier, and the shore seemed as far off as eyer.

"Oh, God help us!" she breathed, and still she swam on. Her arms and back ached cruelly, the knotted sash cut her side, but still she swam on. She could see the beach; a crowd had gathered; they were launching a boat. "They'll never reach us," she said. "Never mind, we'll

die together-my darling." And still she swam 4 on.

A year had passed; Elmering lay once more in the drowsy hush of a July afternoon.

Outside the farmhouse was a crowd of fisher-folk—not a man or woman or child in all the village but had come up to Haynes' that day, and they stood there cheering. Inside the parlour was Laura, and with her a man, a dark, pale, handsome, man.

"Come, Laura," he said. "We must thank them." He limped a very little as he walked towards the door.

Outside the crowd cheered hoarsely, again and again, and when the two stood in the porch the shouts rose deafeningly, hats were waved and handkerchiefs, and twenty hands were thrust forward to touch Laura's.

"Touch there, my lad," said a bearded father to his little one; "that's the hand of the bravest woman l ever see. We're proud, ma'am—I tell you—that you've come to us as knows what you're worth, to spend your honeymoon."

Laura caught the child in her arms and kissed him.

"It was nothing," she said, turning brave eyes on the fisher-folk through blinding tears. "It was not brave; it was selfish—because I loved him—and Love is the power that moves the world."

And as her husband drew her back into the house the cheering broke out again, presently to die away into the golden stillness that wrapped the world on their wedding-day.





By HELEN E. BATWELL.

VERY different from the quict, unostentatious baptisms of our latest-born princes were the imposing ceremonials with which, according to the old historians, the royal infants were formerly received into the church. There is hardly any authentic mention of these functions till the middle of the fifteenth century, from which period the most minute details have been recorded.

While Henry VI. was suffering from some cerebral attack, which wholly incapacitated him, a son was born to him on St. Edward's Day, the 13th of October, 1453. This unexpected birth of a prince, when all hope of an heir to the House of Lancaster had been given up, gave offence to the Yorkists, while it occasioned great rejoicing to the Royal mother and her partizans. They determined to celebrate the christening with unprecedented splendour, notwithstanding the temporary insanity of the King. Westminster Abbey was selected for the ceremony. The font was draped with russet cloth of gold, and surrounded by a blaze of tapers

provided by the monks. The infant was immersed, and after immersion enveloped in a crysom, or christening mantle, of a rich brocade embroidered with pearls and other precious gems, which cost no less than \pounds_{554} 6s. 8d. Lest the baby's tender skin should be chafed by the embroidery, a fine linen wrapper was provided to place underneath the crysom.

A very different scene was the christening of Edward V. He was born during that brief space of time when Edward IV., having been deposed by Warwick, took refuge at the Court of his brother-in-law, the Duke of Burgundy. The Queen retired to the Sanctuary at Westminster, and there the infant Prince first saw the light. For some days no one could be persuaded to christen the babe, then one of the priests of the Abbey consented to perform the sacred rite privately.

The birth of a son to Henry VII, and Elizabeth of York was hailed with great acclamation, for in him the rival houses, whose claims to the throne

had disturbed the country for so many years, were united. He was born at Winchester Castle and baptized in the cathedral of that ancient city. The Countess of Richmond, mother of the King, who was a great authority on Court etiquette (she wrote a treatise on the subject), was deputed to arrange the pageant of the baptism. Much to the chagrin of the punctilious grandmother, the ceremony was disturbed by the unpunctuality of the Earl of Oxford, one of the sponsors. He was

nearly all Henry VII.'s children, was specially sent from Canterbury for this occasion. The God parents were Cardinal Wolsey, the Princess Katherine Plantagenet, and the Duchess of Norfolk; while the Countess of Salisbury presented the babe at the altar. Many handsome presents were given by those who assisted at the ceremony. A gold cup from Cardinal Wolsey; a golden pomander (a hollow perforated ball to hold a ball of paste formed of perfumes which was either carried in the hand or hung from the girdle) from her aunt, Mary Tudor, after whom she was named; a gold spoon from the Princess Katherine; and a richly illuminated primer from the Duchess of Norfolk, were the most notable.

Greenwich Palace was likewise the birthplace of Queen Elizabeth. The King, putting aside his disappointment at the sex of the infant, ordered a solemn "Te Deum" to be sung in honour of her birth.

and preparations for her christening to be made with as much magnificence as if she had been the ardently desired male heir. The fourth day after her birth was fixed for conferring the sacred rite in the same church of Grey Friars, which had been the



OLD GREENWICH PALACE, FIFTEENTH CENTURY,

SANCTUARY, WESTMINSTER, FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

more than three hours late, during which time the royal babe was kept waiting in the cold cathedral on a wet, stormy day, the danger to his health being forgotten.

appearance to perform the office of presenting the infant to the officiating prelate, was the signal for the conclusion of the service with all possible speed. Then, preceded by the trumpeters, and escorted by the torch bearers, the child was carried to the Queen's bed chamber,

where, according to custom, the King sat, and the united blessing of the parents was bestowed.

Henry VIII. gave full play to his love of gorgeous display at the baptisms of his children. Mary I. was born at Greenwich Palace, February 18th, 1516, and received into the church the third day after her birth. The rite was performed in the Grey Friars Church, close to the palace, in the presence of most of her royal relations. The silver font, which had been used at the christening of

scene of her sister's baptism. The Lord Mayor of London, with the Aldermen and Council, was summoned to attend. They went arrayed in their full robes and chains of office, by boat to Greenwich, where they found a vast concourse of nobles, gentlemen and clergy gathered together. The road between the palace and the church was decorated; the walls were hung with arras, and the ground strewn with green rushes. Inside the church handsome curtains of tapestry were suspended. The font, which was of silver, stood in the centre of the church, raised on three steps; over it was placed a square canopy of crimson satin edged with gold

fringe. A space around the font was railed in, and covered with cloth, outside of which stood the guard, consisting of gentlemen wearing aprons and having towels round their necks. A small chamber, heated by fire, was erected between the chancel and choir, in which the infant was disrobed for immersion. The procession started from the hall of the palace, and consisted of "all sorts and con-

ditions of men." After the peers and prelates, walked the Earl of Essex, holding the gilt-covered basins: then a Marquis with the taper of virginwax: another nobleman carrying the salt; and Lady Mary of Norfolk, who bore the crysom, which was richly embroidered with pearls and precious stones. The Dowager Duchess of Norfolk,

elaborate canopy, supported by five peers, nearly related to the Queen. The infant wore a purple velvet mantle, trimmed with ermine, having a long train borne by the Countess of Kent, assisted by the Queen's father and the Earls of Wiltshire and Derby. The Dukes of Suffolk and Norfolk walked on either side of the royal babe. At the church-door she was received by the Bishop of London, surrounded by a great number of bishops and abbots in full canonicals. The name of Elizabeth was bestowed on this Princess, who was destined to be the great

great grandmother of the

Princess, carried her under an

Protestant Queen, with all the ceremonial appertaining to the administration of the rite of baptism in the Roman Catholic Church. The God-parents were Archbishop Cranmer (at that time in high favour with the King, from the fact that he had been instrumental in making his union with Anue Boleyn possible), the Duchess of Norfolk, and Marchioness of Dorset. No sooner was the baptism accomplished than the Garter King-at-Arms cried aloud: "God of his infinite goodness send a prosperous life and long to the high and mighty Princess of England, Elizabeth."

The gifts which were presented in the church were of great value and beauty. Cranmer gave a standing cup of gold; the Duchess of Norfolk a cup of gold, set with pearls; the Marchioness of Dorset three gilt bowls; and the Marchioness of Exeter three engraved, gilt standing bowls, with covers.

Light refreshment, in the shape of sweetmeats, appears to have been handed round to the company before leaving the sacred building. The procession back to the palace was preceded by a flourish of trumpets, and es-

corted by five hundred yeomen of the guard and royal servants, carrying torches, whilst the infant herself was surrounded by gentlemen with waxen flambeaux. The Lord Mayor and citizens were regaled with an abundance of wine prior to their departure for London.

The historical documents of the time prove that the King and Court were plunged into a delirium of joy by the birth of Jane Seymour's son at Hampton Court on the 12th of October, 1537. So intense was the satisfaction, that the Queen's well-being was neglected in the desire to celebrate the appearance of the eagerly longed-for heir. An elaborate christening was arranged to take place in the chapel of Hampton Court Palace the fourth day after his birth. It was the rule for the Queen of England to occupy a state pallet (the sofa of that period), placed in her presence chamber on the day of the formality. Henry VIII., who, like his grandmother, the Countess of Richmond, always insisted on strict adherence to courtly etiquette, would not dispense with this item of the ceremonial, though warned that the Queen might suffer in consequence. The royal mother, wrapped in a crimson mantle trimmed with ermine, reclined on a couch, richly decorated at the back, with the crown and arms of England wrought in gold thread. It had two long and two square cushions, on which the queen lay propped up with four pillows, covered with crimson and gold damask, and a counterpane of the same colour, lined with ermine, was thrown over her feet. The King sat beside her during the hours which elapsed

from the time the child was taken to the chapel till he was brought back to receive the parental blessing. The preparations were so immense that it was nearly midnight before the service could be begun. A large porch was erected at the chapel door, richly carpeted and covered with cloth of gold and arras; the whole body of the

building was hung with the same. A high stage was erected in the middle, in the centre of which stood the silver-gilt font, having a magnificent canopy, covered with cloth of gold and fringed with gold. The barriers which surrounded the

font were covered with cloth of gold. The font, which three knights in aprons, with towels round their necks, guarded, was large enough for immersion. It was elevated on four steps, handsomely carpeted. The procession from the royal apartments to the chapel consisted of the personages who were to assist. The little Princess Elizabeth, roused from her sleep for the purpose, and dressed in robes of state, carried the

crysom (she was herself borne in the arms of Seymour, the Queen's brother). The Earl of Wiltshire, father of the murdered Anne Boleyn, wearing a towel round his neck, took the taper of virgin wax. The Marchioness of Exeter followed with the infant prince in her arms, walking under a canopy supported by the Duke of Suffolk, the Marquis of Exeter,

FONT USED AT THE CHRISTENING OF CHARLES II.

and other gentlemen. The train of the christening robe was borne by the Earl of Arundel, Lord William Howard, the prince's nurse, and the Queen's nurse, whilst other servants walked near. The Princess Mary joined the royal party in the chapel. A "Te Deum" was sung while the attendants made ready the baby, then the ceremony was pro-

ceeded with as arranged beforehand. Lord William Howard gave the towel to the Princess Mary. who was to present her brother at the font. Lord Fitzwalter brought the covered basins. which were uncovered by Lord Delawar. The Godfathers were the Duke of Norfolk, a zealous Catholic, and Archbishop Cranmer, burned as a heretic in Mary's - reign. As soon EDWARD VI.'S FONT. as the rite was performed the

the customary proclamation, and handsome presents were offered. Then the heir was taken back in solemn state to his mother's chamber. The Princess Mary led her sister Elizabeth, who, child of four though she was, wore a long train.

The son of the ill-starred Mary Queen of Scots, who became James I. of England, was born in Edinburgh Castle, 19th June, 1566, but

not baptized till the following December. Very soon after his birth, the Superintendent of Lothian was deputed by the brethren of the Scotch Church to wait upon the Queen, offer congratulations, and present a petition that the child might be christened according to the rites of the Reformed Church. Mary received him graciously; and, taking the

infant from his cradle, put him in his arms. This was accepted as an assurance that the request of the Protestant community would be granted. The superintendent fell on his knees and prayed earnestly on the child's behalf, telling him to say



"Amen for himself." The baby made a cooing noise, which

satisfied him and delighted the Queen, who, however, neglected the opportunity of pleasing her subjects, and allowed her son to be received into the church with all Roman Catholic rites. This ceremony took place in the Chapel Royal, Stirling Castle. Mary, forgetting for a time the trouble which surrounded her, gave up her mind entirely to the arrangement of the christening solemnity. She desired that the noble assistants and their followers should attend in special colours. Earl Moray and his attendants were to wear green; the Earl of Argyle, red; and Bothwell, blue. Queen Elizabeth of England consented to act (by proxy) as Godmother, sending a silver gilt font, weighing three hundred and thirtythree ounces, worth over £1,000, with a message to the effect that she had ordered it to be made as soon as the news of the infant's birth had been announced to her: but she feared he would have outgrown it before it was used. She had neither time nor inclination to go to Scotland herself, nor could she spare any of her ladies as proxy; but she appointed the Countess of Argyle to act as her substitute on the solemn occasion. The Earl of Bedford and an embassy represented England, but they had strict injunctions from their sovereign to ignore

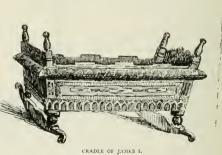
Darnley, whom she detested and refused to acknowledge as King Consort of Scotland. This placed Mary in a dilemma. She did not wish to offend Elizabeth, nor to give her own people reason to suppose she slighted her husband. However, in the end, Darnley, though in the Castle at the time, absented himself from the chapel by his wife's request; while Lord Bothwell did the honours, received the ambassadors, and arranged the day's proceedings.

The infant heir was placed in the arms of the French ambassador as proxy for the Godfather, Charles IX. of France, and carried by him to the chapel, through corridors lined with lighted tapers. He was then handed to the Countess of Argyle, who in her turn presented him to the officiating prelate. The font sent by Elizabeth was used,

and he received the names of Charles James, after which the herald called out the names three times for the benefit of the people.

A sumptuous supper was served in the Great Hall of Parliament, to which the foreign guests were invited. Mary lavished presents on the English to the full value of the font, and ordered banquets, masks, fireworks, and other displays for their entertainment, which surprised as well as delighted them.

St. James's Palace was the scene of the next



baptism of importance—that of Charles II. It was performed in the chapel within its precincts, and was the first instance of an heir to the throne in this country receiving the rite according to the form in the Book of Common Prayer. Laud officiated, assisted by the Bishop of Norwich. The sponsors

were Louis XIII. and Marie de Medicis (Roman Catholics), and Palgrave (Protestant), who joined together in promising that the Prince should be brought up in the tenets of the Church of England. The vows, being made by proxy, did not appear binding. The presents were numerous, that of the old Duchess of Richmond, a jewel worth $\pounds 7,000$, far surpassing all others. The state dresses worn on this occasion were white satin, trimmed with crimson, and crimson stock-

It is a long step from r630 to 1842, but the royal personages between Charles II. and our own Prince of Wales had no particular display at their christenings.

ings.

For weeks before the memorable 25th January, preparations for this royal function were being hurried forward. St. George's Chapel,

Windsor, was thoroughly overhauled. To secure the infant prince cold, arrangefrom ments were made for heating the sacred building. It was considered advisable to raise the temperature to fifty-five degrees, and this was found impossible without the addition of two more stoves. which were accordingly procured from the Pavilion at Brighton. The font was taken from the Tower to be regilt. The Chapter House was done up for

the reception of the Prince when he arrived in the chapel. The music to be performed was rehearsed several times in the presence of the Prince Consort, and everything was done to render the auspicious event a complete success. Invitations were sent to the important men in the kingdom, and it is amusing to read that the City of London was highly complimented because the Lord Mayor and sheriffs of the City were bidden

to the ceremony and to the state banquet which followed.

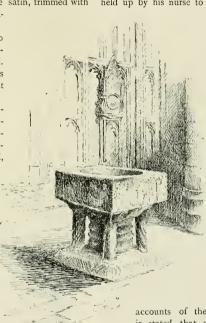
Windsor was the scene of great rejoicing on the eventful day. At eight o'clock in the morning the bells were set ringing. At ten the visitors began to arrive. The procession left the Castle between twelve and one; it consisted of five state carriages, in the third of which was the infant Prince of Wales, held up by his nurse to the gaze of the crowd.

The Oueen and Prince Consort occupied the fifth. On arriving at the chapel, the Duchess of Buccleuch is said (according to the newspapers of the time) to have taken the Prince and held him at the font. Placed on an ottoman of purple velvet, trimmed with deep bullion lace, stood the font, which is only used at the christening of the heir apparent of the reigning Sovereign (Charles II. being an instance). It is kept amongst the regalia in the Tower. It consists of a golden salver, in which rests a pedestal and bowl of silver - gilt. In some

accounts of the day's proceedings, it is stated, that out of this historic font rose another pedestal, surmounted by cherubim, bearing the richly chased and costly gold vessel in which the Princess Royal (Empress Frederick) had been baptised. Water from the Jordan, then not so common or easily procured

as now, was used, brought from the Holy Land by the Rev. Charles Elliot, of Tattingstone, in Suffolk. So sacred and marvellous was this considered by the people, that all pressed eagerly forward to dip their fingers into the water.

The prelates in attendance were the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Bishops of London, Winchester, Norwich, and Oxford, besides whom there were numerous lesser dignitaries.



THE FORT IN WINCHESTER CATHEDRA

The God-parents were the King of Prussia, who gave the name, the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg, the Princess Sophia (daughter of George III.), the Duke of Cambridge, and Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg. Upon the conclusion of the ceremony, the Prince was carried back to the Chapter Room by the Duchess of Buccleuch, preceded by the Lord

Chamberlain, with his wand of office, while the Hallelujah Chorus was sung by the choir. The day ended with a banquet at which the Queen was present.

Since that time the christenings have been conducted without any of their former pomp and grandeur.

IN THE HIGH ALPS:

By J. Brierley, B.A.

THUNDERING knock at the door, and a clear voice shouting: "Tumble up, it is twelve o'clock, and no time to lose," was the salute which roused me from my slumbers one fine night in August last, and caused me to turn out instantly. We were lodged in a charming retreat in one of the upper valleys of Vaud. At its eastern end, rose to a height of over 10,000 feet the huge irregular mass of the Diablerets, which, crowned with its great glaciers, forms the most striking feature of that part of the country. It was this mountain which had proved the attraction sufficient to draw us from our beds at that unearthly hour. As a climb, it was not considered specially difficult or dangerous, as Alps go, but events were to take place in connection with our expedition which were not in the programme, and which were to make it exciting enough for the most exacting of mountaineers. In addition to the guide, our party consisted of myself, of three stalwart, well-grown English youths, who were now to make their first experience of the realms of ice and snow, and of a Swiss pastor, who proved himself that day to be not only bon camarade but a first-rate Alpinist,

In less than an hour we had dressed and breakfasted, and were *en route* for our guide's châlet. It was a perfect night. The sky blazed with stars and was without a cloud. The weather had hitherto been fickle, and we had

waited long for the opportunity that had now come to us. It was, therefore, in the highest spirits, as we thought of the magnificent view that would be assured us, that we pushed on to the rendezvous. There we found our guide waiting for us, with all his preparations made. On his back he carried a knapsack with provisions, and in his hand a long-handled ice-axe. Another of our party slung across his shoulders the long coil of stout rope for glacier work, Each of us carried an alpenstock, and we had taken care to have our boots shod with sharp-pointed nails. The word was given, and we set ourselves in motion. For the first hour our march was along a winding road which skirted the base of the mountain we were to climb. Our guide was an old chamois-hunter, as had been his father and grandfather before him; and he enlivened the road with stories of the mountains and of his adventures, which lost none of their charm from the quaint Vaudois dialect in which they were recounted. "Up to what age do you mountaineers keep up your climbing?" I asked him. "Well, my father had retired by the time he was seventy, but declared he was just as equal to it as when he was twenty-five," He himself was on the shady side of middle life, but we had experience that day of what iron and steel his nerves and muscles seemed made.

"Diablerets! That is rather a grim name

for a mountain. What is the origin of it?" was another of our questions. For answer we had a curious story enough. In 1714, the whole valley was affrighted by strange unearthly noises proceeding, as it seemed, from the very bowels of the mountain. The priests told "the people that a war had broken out in the infernal regions, and that a pitched battle was going on between legions of demons imprisoned under the rocks. Then it was that the mountain was rebaptised with its present uncanny name. Later in the year the solution of the mystery came in the shape of an enormous landslip, of which the internal rumblings had been the warning, which rent the whole mountain, as it were, in twain, one half rolling away from the other, and blotting out all the old features of the country. Numbers of people and multitudes of cattle perished. The most extraordinary part of the business, however, consisted in the reappearance of a farmer after having been buried for three months. A funeral service had been held near the spot where his châlet had disappeared, and his relatives were in mourning for him as one When, haggard and spectre-like, he presented himself in the neighbouring village, the inhabitants fled in terror, and a priest was summoned to exorcise the spirit. It was with the greatest difficulty that he succeeded in persuading the people he was not a ghost. He had had a miraculous escape. A mass of rock had fallen athwart his châlet, where at the time he was alone, in such a way as to prevent the superincumbent mass from crushing it. Air had reached him through various crevices, and he had been able to support himself on provisions left in the house, until by constant labour he had succeeded in tunnelling his way back to the living world.

By this time we had reached a point where the ascent proper was to commence. Our guide lighted a Chinese lantern, and began to lead the way up through stretches of pasture rendered boggy in places by recent rains. For two hours and more we climbed silently on toward a vast citadel of perpendicular rock which loomed gigantic in the darkness above us. We had now to move cautiously, for the light was uncertain, and we were working along the edge of a chasm which yawned at our right, down which the

white gleam of a cataract could be discerned, as it leaped from the glacier which gave it birth into the gulf below.

By-and-bye we made a halt and looked around us. In the west, the stars had paled and become indistinct. To the north, the serrated ridge which, rising into peaks of from 6000 to 7000 feet, shut in the valley on that side, were already below us. But it was to the east that all eves were now turned. What was to be seen there is difficult to describe, and, to those who have not had the experience, impossible to imagine. Above the tumbled mountain masses which bounded the horizon quivered a band of lovely violet, passing above into a tint of exquisite green, and then again into orange. All the prismatic colours, in fact, were there, and through them the ever-growing light was pulsing and flushing as though it were alive. Out of the old eternities a new, young day was being born.

That mountain solitude, with its abyss beneath us, and its great snowy wastes around, with gigantic shapes showing weirdly across the gulfs of darkness, seemed a fitting observatory for such a scene. The eye travelled from what earth had of sublimest to that which was grandest in the heavens. It was in such spots and at such moments, surely, that the old religions of nature had their rise. In such hours man feels that he must worship something. The earth and heavens which he contemplates are a vast and holy temple, and his instinct is to kneel and to adore.

We had not long, however, for reflections of this kind. We had now reached a point where all our attention had speedily to be concentrated on one thing: viz., to balance ourselves on a sufficiently precarious foothold. We were crossing the "Pas des Dames," a decidedly hazardous bit of work. "Put your feet just where you see me place mine," said the guide, "and don't look down," When we were safely over, he informed us that some time before he was conducting a German gentleman, who, at this spot, lost his head, and he had had to carry him across on his back. "At every step I took," said he, "my German roared out that I should be the death of him. But when I got him over, he shook my hand as if he would never leave off."

A few minutes more and we had reached the "Pierre du Déjeuner," or the Breakfast Stone, where a halt was called and provisions produced. As we discussed our joyous meal, one of our party uttered an exclamation and pointed above our heads. High up, across a mass of fork which towered over us, had shot a bar of burnished gold: the sun had risen, and it was day. We washed down our breakfast with draughts of delicious water from a spring hard by, and were now ready for a fresh start. We were about to enter on the great glacier of Zanfleuron, across which we had two-and-a-half hours before us of steady mounting. The sun was fully up by this time, and the glare of the snowfield was dazzling. Blue veils and spectacles were produced, and, protected by these, we commenced our march. The ice was in good condition and the crevasses not dangerous. We made rapid progress, and by eight o'clock had reached the summit. There was now leisure to take breath, and to give proper attention to a view which we had only taken glimpses of before.

It was one of unsurpassable majesty. A light, fleecy cloud touched with one of its edges the summit of Mont Blanc, as though it were a pennant floating there. With that exception there was not a trace of vapour in the air to mar the perfection of a prospect which included in it all the great peaks of Southern Switzerland, bringing them out with a clearness of outline which seemed to leave no detail invisible. There is an indescribable sensation experienced in gazing from the summit of a great Alp, which makes it a unique experience. The magical purity of the air, giving, as it were, a new consciousness to both eve and lung, the grandeur and immensity of the scene offered to the gaze, the sense of danger and difficulty surmounted, and the feeling of remoteness from all that belongs to ordinary life, combine to give to such moments an entirely separate place in our memories. As the eye swept slowly from point to point, taking in by degrees a picture of which Mont Blanc, Monte Rosa, the Matterhorn, the Weisshorn, and a dozen other Alpine royalties formed part, we commiserated the multitudes of our fellow-creatures to whom such experiences were unknown-the toilers and moilers

immured at that time in stuffy warehouses amid the smoke of unwholesome towns. But in most positions of life there are compensations: before that day was over we found ourselves more than once in circumstances which the warehouseman would probably not have consented at any price to exchange for his own.

We had reached the summit, but the real perils of our expedition were yet to come. In discussing routes it had been suggested that we should return by a somewhat unaccustomed one, which would necessitate our climbing another peak of the range, and bring us down on its further side. The guide said it would mean hard work over some queerish places, but he felt sure we were equal to it. There was no hesitation on our part, and, therefore, after spending an hour on the summit, we once more got under weigh.

Our first bit of work was to cross an arête, or ridge of rock, about a foot in width, and with naked precipices on either side. When we had reached the further end, the guide, who was in front, informed us that he had seen six chamois feeding below. "I didn't tell you of them," said he, " for I was afraid that some of you, if you stopped on the arête and looked down, might turn giddy." Perhaps he was right, but we should have liked to see the chamois. Next came a bit of glacier, to get across which was by no means plain sailing. Covered with hard, frozen snow, and sloping down at a terribly sharp angle, with precipices at the bottom, there was no doubt as to what a false step here would mean. Our guide put us on our guard, "If one of you slips here, gentlemen," remarked he, "he is lost." There was not much of it, fortunately, and the danger was minimised by the steps which he cut for us with his ice-axe. It was not here, nor yet, that we were confronted by the real crux of our day's business. That came halfan-hour later, when engaged amidst the difficult rocks of the Tête Ronde, the second of the two summits. We were scrambling one after another down a steep, rocky wall, when the guide, who had gone on in front to assure himself of his track, came back with strange tidings. A certain couloir, or passage, by which we were to go, had been rendered impassable by an avalanche. If we continued our descent on that side, it would have to be by an improvised path. This was awkward, decidedly. To turn back was almost out of the question, for we had only just been lowered by the rope down a steep precipice. We elected, therefore, to go on.

After waiting some time, while the guide cast about ahead for something practicable, we received from him the order to advance. Soon we found ourselves working along the face of an almost perpendicular precipice. Far above us it rose in solid walls of rock; beneath stretched the abyss. What we had to walk on was a ledge of crumbling shale, in places not certainly more than half a foot wide, sloping generally down rather than up, and anything but firm under foot. To add to the attractions of this little promenade, it was necessary, in the course of it, to turn a sharp corner round a jutting crag. We were edging our way silently along. The guide and the first of our party had disappeared round the corner, when suddenly in front of us a head disappeared from the line: there was a smothered exclamation, and a crash of something falling. One of our young Englishmen, who was next the corner, had put his foot on a bit of the ledge, which had given way under him, and gone rolling into the gulf. He was swiftly following it, and in another second would have been inevitably lost, had not at that moment a grip of iron clutched him. It was that of our friend, the Swiss pastor, who came next in the line of march, and who had seized him by the collar. It was a merciful providence which put him just within reach. For one terrific moment it seemed as if both would go. But our brave Swiss knew how to hold on to the rock, and to his man as well, and in another second had landed him on the ledge. His alpenstock had gone where the eye could not follow. The miracle was, that its owner was still with us. All this had happened like a flash. The next moment the guide was back round the corner, and in our midst. "Courage, messieurs," cried he. "Keep steady; above all things, don't lose your nerve." We needed, in truth, just then, all we possessed of that commodity. There were two of us yet to pass by that broken ledge, and who was to tell that it would not again give way? Of that we had to take our chance. The guide, who moved about the rock face like a chamois, gave us a hand, and in another minute the corner was turned. We had reached a little platform of rock, where, for the moment, we were in safety.

We drew a long breath. There was time now to take a mental note of our consciousness during that memorable minute. We read that Göethe had the habit of turning all his experiences inside out, and examining them for what they would yield in the way of poetry and philosophy. The bit of sensation we had just had was one surely for the mental analyst to work upon with profit. As we rested on the roomy platform, I found myself trying to note, with as much exactness as possible, the phases of one's inner state during the moments of the crisis. What record had the inner registering machine placed on the dial plate? We had been at close grips with death; had, in fact, looked him straight in the face. What of it? The truth is, one thought and felt very little. The whole attention was concentrated on just putting one's foot on the right place and in the right way. The game we were playing was one of life and death, but we played it very much as we should have played any other game. We put our best into it, of nerve and muscle, of quickness of eye and hand. If we won, we won; and if we lost, we lost. We could think otherwise of it afterwards. But at the moment that was all. And surely it is well that it should be so. It is part of nature's inward provision for positions of this kind, that she enables us to concentrate our whole strength on the point where it is all needed.

I lost that day a doubt I had long cherished on this particular point. I had been accustomed to consider it as a fact, and one which it was very difficult to explain, that we were so constituted as to find it easy to preserve our balance where the loss of it would entail nothing serious, as, for instance, in walking along a narrow curb in the street; while in circumstances where to lose it would mean death or maiming, as in working along the edge of a precipice, that was of all things the

most likely to happen. Was not the susceptibility to nervousness in positions of danger a mistake on the part of nature? I believe now that this reasoning rests on false data. The experience I have just been describing gave, at any rate, quite different results. We were most of us, raw recruits at mountaineering, but we found all our nerve where it was most wanted, and at the most critical moments seemed by instinct to do the right thing and to avoid doing the wrong one. We do not say these would be universal experiences, but they were certainly ours.

We had reached a resting-place, but we were as yet by no means out of the wood. There were hours of work yet before us in which exciting situations were constantly presenting themselves, and where every nerve, as well as muscle, was stretched to its utmost tension. At one time we found ourselves descending a kind of chimney, consisting of a narrow perpendicular fissure in the rocks, and where we worked ourselves downward by supporting our backs against one side of the chasm and our feet against the other, exactly in the fashion of the climbing boys of old time. At another, the guide, standing on a rock above, lowered us one by one with the rope down the face of the precipice, as though we were so many bales of merchandise; climbing himself down at the end as only a Swiss mountaineer knows how to. It was an immense relief in the midst of work of

this kind to indulge now and then in a glorious glissade down a snow slope.

I had a narrow escape during one of these slides. A huge stone which had been dislodged from above came bounding after me. The guide, who was behind, called out in warning, but before I could get out of the way it had taken a great leap, just cleared my head, which, had it struck, it would have cracked, and dropped instead in the middle of my thigh, where it inflicted a bruise of a foot long. This little knock did not assist my progress during the remainder of our march, and I guarded the souvenir for many a day afterwards.

It was with strange feelings that, after long hours of excitement and danger, having at length exchanged the regions of rocks and ice for the lower and safe levels of the pastures, we looked back at the frowning, impossible heights above, where so lately we had played our game of life against such heavy odds. There was a sense, in more than one heart, of unspeakable thankfulness to a merciful Providence, which had permitted us to emerge from such perils, an unbroken company, and without serious accident to life and limb.

"Messieurs," said our guide, as we stood and gazed, "I congratulate you. The Matterhorn does not present such difficulties as those you have come through. The track we followed was only one for chamois. There is nothing left for you in the Alps to do."





TRAVELLING.

BY AN OLD TRAVELLER.

T T is a well-known fact, that travelling is one of the greatest tests of friendship. Your very dear friend may have lived near you for years, and you may have shared each other's lives in many ways; or, though distance separated you, "absence made the heart grow fonder," as a chatty correspondence was mutually kept up. Perhaps you met at a sea-side place annually, and exchanged visits from time to time, and never the faintest ghost of a quarrel haunted your peace: all went on happily. Then one fine day you agreed to travel together, and "a change came o'er the spirit of your dream." As you jostled each other at crowded stations, squeezed each other in a crammed railway carriage, getting, in train or hotel, the place or room the other had set his heart upon, discovering dissimilarity of tastes never suspected before, you began to let in the serpent of criticism into your Eden, you mutually discovered faults in each other you never knew of before, and, while you helplessly felt extremely angry at seeing how completely the knowledge of a foreign tongue you barely understood placed you at your friend's mercy, he, on the other hand, was deciding that your choice of route was a very bad one, and your selections of hotels worse,

This, of course, is happily not always the case. Sometimes it is precisely the reverse, and the acquaintances who have started on journey or tour find themselves, at the end, real friends in the truest sense of that much abused and misused word.

So that, in offering some hints as to the best method of comfort in travelling, we would begin with one on the selection of companions—presupposing, of course, that choice is possible, and the journeys taken more in the way of recreation than merely on necessary business. Two or four are good numbers for travelling; three rather an awkward number, for not only does the old saying with reference; to three being no company hold good here, but, in some cases, it adds to the general expense.

In Switzerland and Germany, as well as other countries, a great deal of pleasant travelling can be made in those small carriages holding two comfortably, and the third party often has an uncomfortable seat with no back. besides adding to the cost of conveyance. For four or more, it is worth while taking a larger carriage altogether. We, as old travellers, are very much in favour of these long drives. when scenery is the object rather than speed-It prevents us, too, from feeling that the journey is accomplished, as George Eliot calls it-" like an exclamatory oh!"-with a swiftness which renders the cultivation of the mind by true acquaintance with fresh scenes and people, quite out of the question. That the tastes and ways of a travelling companion should be like your own, in all respects, is not necessary; but sufficient sympathy should exist and harmony reign to make the chances of agreement great.

In strength, too, it is desirable that there should be a certain amount of equality. For a great walker to elect to take a tour in Switzerland with a delicate friend, who, as far

as her pedestrian powers are concerned, thinks she has done pretty well if she has walked two miles, who is content to scale mountains through the medium of a telescope, and who heartily wishes the world was one flat surface, is a great mistake.

So, also, for the individual who delights in pictures, it is foolish to go with one friend who simply walks through a gallery with a view to being able truthfully to say he has been there, and who regards it as a personal grievance if his art-loving friend cares to return for a passing glimpse at some great work.

To travel in comfort abroad, the less luggage you can do with the better. Some people take for a short tour only what they can, at a push, carry in their hands, and very much time, trouble, and temper do they economise thereby.

For a plan of this kind, a travelling bolster is not a bad thing to have, but it is not pretty, and we prefer a gladstone of the regulation size permissible for taking into a railway carriage, and being consigned under the seat. In these days, and if you act on the principle of going always to good hotels—not necessarily the most fashionable—which is always best to do, you can have your linen washed, and returned to you in a few hours. So that, when we advocate the gladstone, which will only contain a small amount of linen if you have no other luggage, we need not feel that we are forgetting that virtue mentioned by John Wesley as being "Next to Godliness."

There are various small things that can be easily carried in a hand-bag, or accessible place, which very much add to the comfort of the traveller.

Soap-leaves are very nice things to have with you, one sufficing for one time of washing face or hands. Some people wring a sponge not quite out, and having it within reach in an oilskin bag, can take a little of the dust off face and hands on a long dusty journey—a minor form of refreshment by no means to be despised. A spirit-lamp is another gnod thing to have, and an air-cushion, which takes little room, is often of value.

Knowledge of the language is a great addi-

tion to the pleasure of travelling, and, a foreign tour being in prospect, if those to take it were to devote some time to the study of the tongues of those countries they propose visiting, they would reap the benefit.

Insular self-consciousness and the British instinct which makes people afraid of "making fools of themselves," deter many a one from using what little he knows of a strange tongue. He desires to speak more fluently, and to acquire the right accent of the language, of which, perhaps, he knows the grammar perfectly, and yet, on crossing the Channel, and wherever afterwards he may proceed, his one anxiety seems to be to find the English-speaking waiter. He is charmed when his eyes light upon "English spoken" in some shop, and to it he goes to make his purchases.

Now, however imperfectly he may speak the language, and however painfully British be his accent, if he wishes to improve both—particularly if he be young—it is best to air what he knows on all possible occasions. Usually foreigners are too polite to laugh before him, no matter how egregious may be his blunders; and supposing they do smile when he is gone, what matters?

In travelling, usually, whether at *table d' hote*, in a train, or wherever you are brought into proximity with the native, it is most unwise to make remarks in his presence which you would not care for him to hear, and which you fondly believe he does not understand because you are talking in the vulgar tongue of your own land.

Foreigners are very quick, as a rule; they often understand a great deal more than you imagine; therefore, let your desire to be courteous give you tact and caution.

If you can speak the language of those you meet, then if you pocket your self-consciousness and meet any little advances with pleasure, you will often be amply repaid. Surely to travel is to learn, and if the noblest study of mankind is man, may we ask how you intend to pursue that study, if you converse only with your compatriots?

Needless to say there are times when weariness or some other cause makes you prefer not to talk, but when you do enter into conversation with the native, you have a chance of learning

more-often very much more-than books will tell you of the country you are in. Odd customs will be explained to you, folklore told you, little local touches shown you in the life pictures you are looking at, and you will rub off a good many prejudices in the process. And, let me hint, in criticising native ways with the inhabitants of a country, be careful not to wound their feelings by sneering remarks, needless complaints, and incessant comparison with England to the extraordinary advantage, of course, of the latter, To travel with rose-coloured glasses will lend fairness to many an ugly landscape-if nature can ever be ugly-and will enable you to view the foreigner and his doings kindly, though critically. In any case, pray put them on when speaking to him. As we are on the subject of politeness, which has been called "good nature refined," it might be as well to remind the traveller that difference of creed, if that exist, does not give him the right to behave with rudeness and irreverence in the buildings set apart for religious purposes. The tourist who exchanges loud remarks with his friend as he tramps round a church, while service is going on, is guilty of bad taste and want of due respect where it has all right to be demanded.

There are many things in religion, art, ways, and manners not dreamt of in the philosophy of the true Briton until he crosses the Channel, and to see, with him, is to laugh; to be surprised is to sneer. But, if "gentle by birth or nature," he will reserve his amusement, if such is afforded him, for such time as he is not in the presence or hearing of the people of the country.

If weather-bound in lodging or hotel, time often hangs very heavily on one's hands. Perhaps there are not many people at the hotel, and those not congenial, as well as the salon library not offering much mental food. If you are wise and are travelling with more than a gladstone—we admit the latter does not admit much margin for the adoption of this suggestion—you will have some work or books to fall back upon, should you feel disposed for more reading

than you can find in your Baedeker. Apropos of guide-books, excellent and trustworthy as is the information given in those by well-known compilers, still, to have studied the history of the country, to know a little about the art and architecture of it, will make your sight-seeing more enjoyable than it often is.

It is pitiful, often, to see people walking through miles of picture galleries, ignorant of pictures, and referring anxiously to their guidebooks to see what is correct to admire. If they had but studied some of the many art textbooks now published, had read a little of the lives of the painters, however little absolute knowledge of art itself in the sense of discriminating taste they might possess, still it would be more interesting. If in travelling you desire to do more than merely amuse yourself, then we would advise your seeing rather little than very much, and seeing that little thoroughly.

If you want merely to get a bird's eye view of a country, and not sleep two nights in the same place, do so, by all means, all having the right to please themselves. But for the true education of the mind, its enrichment with fresh stores of knowledge, a smaller amount of ground traversed, and some few places really studied, are far more likely to do what is desired.

The little books purporting to enable the traveller to see Rome in six days, and describing how Germany can be "done," are truthful as far as they go. It is quite possible to glance at one ruin after another, go the round of many churches and galleries, and see an enormous amount in a short time, but this possibility has its disadvantages. Nothing is, or can be, seen thoroughly in this way; and to some people the succession of new images before the mind is a strain rather than the rest and refreshment which travelling is intended to be.

Let the mind enlarge in travelling—remember Hood's words:

[&]quot; Some minds improve by travelling, others rather,

Like copper-wire or brass, but get the narrower by going farther."



WE have heard much recently of the modern woman, her attributes, occupations, and the multifarious attainments expected of her. Some have claimed her as an almost realised ideal of advanced civilisation and latterday thought, while others, pessimistically inclined, wail over her degeneracy from earlier models, her lack of reserve, and her danger of losing that particular combination of qualities which is conveniently, if somewhat vaguely, summed up in the term "womanliness."

Perhaps the real woman, like Truth, may be hidden somewhere between the two extremes, waiting for the unprejudiced eye which shall discern and reveal her to a long expectant world. Meanwhile, the strife of tongues goes on, and Woman (with the capital letter) may proudly claim to be one of the leading "subjects" of the age. It would be strange, indeed, if, in these days of shifting opinions and crumbling creeds, she were to escape from searching analysis; and the most dim-sighted mortal must recognise her part in the general revolution, as he cannot fail to perceive how widely the present ideals of womanhood differ from those of even a still recent past.

The briefest glance at current fiction suffici-

ently accentuates the fact; and as novels claim to be a picture of ordinary human life, there can, perhaps, be no clearer or more interesting method of tracing the gradual change in feminine types, than in considering some with which past and recent novelists have presented usthose novelists being themselves women, and, as such, competent to speak with authority. For perhaps it will scarcely be denied that male novelists are not, as a rule, successful with their They labour under that masculine disadvantage of ignorance of the sex, once demonstrated so clearly by J. S. Mill. Their heroines, therefore, are often, though not always, merely figments of the brain (or of the heart?), beautiful or terrible, but visionary. On the other hand, when a woman sets herself to delineate the life and character of one of her sex, to describe her emotions, and the scenes and circumstances which develop or react upon them, it is natural she should fashion her heroine upon the lines of the women around her, with whose natures, aims, and conditions of life, she is more or less familiar. These, idealised by her imagination, are reproduced in her writings, and her types, whether true or false, stand out to the world as embodiments of their creator's power. They represent all she knows of woman, of her strength and weakness, her glory or her shame. Often, indeed, is a heroine founded upon the novelist's own personality and experiences; the "delicate creation" of the story is but the revelation of another self, of what its maker might be, or might aim at being, under other circumstances than those which have defined her life.

In all cases the conception must bear the stamp of the author's individuality and mode of thought, and a vet more potent force, that of the spirit of the age in which she lives. greater the writer the more forcibly will she receive this impression, and in proportion to her accuracy of insight will be her power of representation. As she observes the current of thought and is moved by the needs and aspirations of the lives around her, she cannot fail, even though sometimes unconsciously, to reflect the same in her books, and thus often becomes the exponent of those ideas which have most contributed to her own development. genius which seizes upon the salient characteristics of the age, and reveals them to a world before but dimly conscious of their existence.

There are three names which must ever stand pre-eminent on the list of female novelists: Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, and George Eliot; and the most superficial student of their books cannot fail to be struck with their diverse types of womanhood. Their heroines are distinct offsprings of each author's individuality; but they reveal so clearly the social conditions under which they were produced that whoso runs may read.

Turning first to Jane Austen, whose novels present a photograph of the manners and morals of a section of society that is almost startling in its fidelity to detail, we know she wrote at a period when young ladies wore "peaked sarsnet caps" in the morning, and went to "assemblies" in the evening; when they were prone to exclaim, "Oh, la!" and swoon on emergencies; when a solitary walk was apt to be regarded as dangerous or unladylike, and the preference of books to cards suggested a Miss-ish affectation, or, worse still, a suspicious tendency towards "Blueness," fatal to their prospects. Yet, in spite of these characteristics,

Miss Austen has sketched for us more than once, with crisp and graceful touch, pictures of healthy, natural girlhood, such as English women should be proud to possess.

One of the most brilliant and charming specimens is to be recognised in the person of Miss Elizabeth Bennet, in "Pride and Prejudice." It must be acknowledged that Elizabeth's aims and sympathies were very bounded. Of culture, in the modern acceptation of the word, she knew nothing: her natural good sense and ready wit atoned for any deficiencies of education, and ensured her an easy triumph over her more commonplace acquaintances, whose powers of conversation were, nevertheless, "considerable," since they could "describe an entertainment with accuracy, relate an anecdote with humour, and laugh at their acquaintance with spirit."

Elizabeth's world was not a world of high ideals, of grave, moral responsibilities. The spirit of scientific inquiry had not begun to penetrate every department of human life, and psychological study was, as yet, undreamt of. Questions of public weal did not divide the dinner-tables, or flutter the drawing-rooms of those respectable country gentlemen and their ladies; and the most serious problem which stirred Elizabeth's soul was the probability of an "amiable and gentleman-like young man," with five thousand a year, making a proposal to her sister, agreeably diversified by sundry doubts as to whether this haughty young friend, of "noble mien" and corresponding fortune, was not beginning to admire herself. Balls and assemblies were the great event of her life, and the anticipations and consequences thereof to herself, family, and friends, formed sufficient subjects of interest for thought, memory, and conversation.

It is true she reads occasionally, and is a student of character, deriving no small enjoyment from her keen observation of her neighbour's foibles and follies; but this is for her own amusement only: she remains perfectly free from any grave reflections or subtle speculations as to human character and conduct. She has the easy-going conscience of the age in which she lived, and the serious side of life seldom troubles her. Her younger sister's

elopement with a scoundrel chiefly affects her as a social disgrace: this once wiped away, the affair becomes of less importance. Mr. Collins' solemn oddities are infinitely diverting to her, and suggest no misgiving as to the value of his influence and teaching. She does not concern herself with philanthropy, and of the existence of that humbler classof mortals beyond the limits of her father's and lover's gates she appears altogether unconscious.

But it is an unthankful task to dissect Elizabeth's shortcomings. Rather should we try to render justice to that charm which keeps her fresh amongst a host of more recent heroines, and seasons her relations with a trying family circle. Her father's biting sarcasms afford her some pleasurable sensations, but as regards Mrs. Bennet, it speaks well for Elizabeth's amiability and sense of duty that she was not constantly and sincerely ashamed of her. It is to be doubted whether the "leading ladies" of our present-day fiction—high-souled as some of them are—could bear maternal vulgarity and folly with like patience.

Yet Elizabeth has no milk and water in her composition: one can but admire the spirit and dignity with which she administers her rebuke to the griggish Darcy, and checkmates the autocratic Lady Catherine. She is always equal to the occasion, and her gaiety and good humour can withstand the most unfavourable circumstances, and the most aggressive of bores. Even Lady Catherine de Bourgh's dull drawingroom cannot quench the sparkle of her wit, though it never shines to such advantage as when tête-à-tête with her stiff lover. Uninteresting as Darcy is, we are obliged to like him at last for being so sincerely in love, and realising that his salvation is in a charming wife who dares to laugh at him.

From Elizabeth Bennet to Charlotte Brontë's "Shirley" is a stride indeed. Life has become more serious, more complex, and the fervid accents of one slight woman, far away in a lonely moorland parsonage, were as the first notes of a strain which, ever deepening and widening, was to be taken up by many voices of varying tone and intensity, and awaken echoes not yet silenced.

Charlotte Brontë wrote her novels with no

definite purpose; they were but the cry of her heart; but when uttered by genius, this cry is like that of "some solitary sentinel whose station is on the outpost of the advance guard of human progression." Hers was a cry for liberty, for a right to live, and speak, and acta fuller, wider, more varied life than had been hitherto possible for her sister women; it was a protest against dull, narrow conventionalism and thread-bare formulæ, a protest at once so novel, passionate, and womanly, that, fraught as it was with truth, it thrilled all thinking minds. The fervour of that first impression has long since ceased to glow; emotion, however intense, is but transitory; but its unconscious influence remains, and issues, of which the dreamer little conceived, may have sprung from Charlotte Brontë's visions.

Although Shirley is the heroine par excellence of the novel, it cannot be denied that Caroline Helstone might well dispute the title. Her sweetness and gentleness, with their substratum of quiet strength, serve as an excellent foil to the brilliance of the warm-hearted and impulsive heiress.

Shirley is painted always in vivid hues; she is made to flash before us "a thing of fire and air"; she is the vision her creator beheld in the twilight, as she recalled the promise of a lost girlhood, and pondered over bright hopes faded, and a great soul to be quenched in sorrow and the grave. Shirley is the apotheosis of her sister Emily-an Emily beautified, enriched, gladdened in the glow that never was on sea or land; but Caroline Helstone lived soberly and loved deeply, on English earth, beneath the light of common day. Yet Shirley, dreamheroine as she was, and lacking the grand proportions of her living model, may be selected to represent the advanced woman of that day, as one who sought to free herself from certain old-world prejudices, and set up a right of private judgment on matters which a humbler type of woman is content to have decided for her; but, judged by a present-day standard, her emancipations are mild, almost Miss-ish. She delights to give herself a man's title, to assume slightly masculine airs and gestures; even dares to wish for a profession or trade, and affects a jaunty disregard of orthodoxy, social, political, or religious. But, as though to counterbalance such audacious flights, Mrs. Pryor, the essence of old-fashioned propriety, is ever at hand to check and reprove. It seems, sometimes, as though Miss Brontë were half afraid of the rebellious spirit of femininity she had herself raised, and Shirley's position as a wealthy land-owner, and her "lord-of-themanor conscience" are emphasised, in order to sustain doctrines which may appear to be dangerous. She strikes us as a little melodramatic at times, as in the scene with Mr. Donne, but, like her creator, she took things seriously, and missed the kindly, half-humorous tolerance of truly emancipated womanhood.

Shirley is designed to be exceptional; she is, in fact, a high-spirited, noble-natured girl, of poetic genius; and in spite of the daring unconventionalisms, of which we hear so much, it is her friend Caroline's lips that utter the strongest plea for woman's larger life. Shirley is prosperous and happy; her mind is well-stored; but for all her earnestness, courage, and passion, she has done little more than skim the surface of existence, and, undisciplined and inexperienced, is left to the guidance of the tutor-lover, who is meant to stand for that embodiment of calm strength, to which the higher woman yields a willing submission.

Of the supremacy of the emotions, though she could control them so valiantly, Miss Brontë was an ardent upholder; and the spectacle of the "leopardess," vanquished, surrendering pride, riches, and liberty at the feet of one whom Mrs. Wilfer would term a mendicant, is one of her most vivid illustrations that love is lord of all. It is a somewhat stormy scene, and, perhaps, we scarcely needed such impassioned manifestations to assure us that Shirley was very woman.

Looking back for a moment upon our first heroine, we realise yet more strongly that we are breathing a different atmosphere. Where is the orderly arrangement, the reticence, the self-possession, which mark the love-stories in "Pride and Prejudice"?

In Miss Austen's book, one walks in a trim garden, amidst well-clipt hedges, straight gravel paths, and beds of sweet-smelling, old-fashioned flowers: in Shirley we may bear wild winds rushing like a flood through the forest trees, and wander for miles over stretches of heather-covered moor. The clear-eyed tranquility and narrow practical life have vanished; unrest and discontent are in the air; the subtler emotions, the haunting pathos of the nineteenth century is opening out before us:

"Infinite passion and the pain Of finite hearts that yearn."

The note is struck with deepened power by George Eliot in the story of that modern St. Theresa, "whose loving heart-beats and sobs after an unattained goodness tremble off and are dispersed among hindrances, instead of centring in some long recognized deed."

Dorothea Brooke is a specimen of high-minded womanhood, whose lot is cast in an age of transition. Old gods are falling shattered from their niches, and, with thoughtful brow and pathetic eyes, she moves, hesitating, amidst their ruins, conscious of power, fired by noble enthusiasm, yet failing to achieve some perfect aim; failing, perhaps, because she misses the simple wisdom of the just, which learns to reconcile conflicting realities, and draw peace from the heart of storm.

Dorothea studies; tries philanthropy and the construction of model cottages, but remains unsatisfied; she links herself with learned effort to better mankind, and makes a marriage from which common sense or a touch of humour might have saved her, and finding her mistake too late, is turned back heart-sick upon herself. But she accepts her discipline with patience, and nowhere, perhaps, comes so near our heart as when she lends her strong young arm and generous heart for the support of the husband, who, with all his lore, remains incapable of a guess at his wife's spiritual language. At last she seeks the true feminine beatitude, but even in her love cannot be said to pass "in music out of sight," There is the same haunting sense of loss, of failure; and the life devotion to a Ladislaw is almost as mistaken as her reverence for Casaubon.

Shirley thus spoke out her heart: "I should be glad to see my superior; the higher above me, so much the better. It degrades to stoop: it is glorious to look up. What frets me is, that when I try to esteem, I am baffled; when religiously inclined, there are but false gods to adore. I disdain to be a Pagan." The essentials of womanhood remain the same, though fiction and fact alike change their aspect, but others besides Dorothea will continue sometimes to adore false gods.

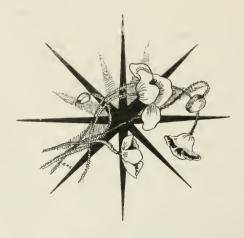
George Eliot's heroine is touched with the morbid introspective spirit of her day, and leaves behind her an unsatisfactory impression that increased knowledge and breadth of outlook have made womanhood melancholy, without conclusively ministering to the discovery of its true sphere and influence. We know that "high failure overleaps the bound of low success;" and perhaps the man, and more especially the woman of ideas, must submit to be uncomfortable, as a kind of retribution for daring to be superior to her fellows; but was this the moral with which Dorothea's story was to admonish her sisters? Had her environment been different, the result would possibly have been the same : the flaw lay in her own nature, or in that of her creator, who has given us a problem, and stopped short of its solution.

To triumph in the learning of life's uses and failures is a height of optimism to be sought in the gospel of another teacher; a gospel tardy of popular recognition, yet, says a recent reviewer, "peculiarly needed by the present generation," and destined perhaps more definitely to influence the future. "When the wail of pain, doubt, and despair, which is the keynote of much of our highest modern utterance," has spent itself, Browning's "serene confidence" may have impressed on mankind the secret of a more glad and triumphant life.

The woman of the latter half of our century awaits her historian. In the evidences of intellectual training and busy practical life, in the efforts after a wholesome independence and self-reliance, may we not read signs that the heroines of the future will find less need for introspection and vague spiritual maladies?

If their representatives must take all kinds of knowledge for their province, including sometimes the hard facts of public life, and yet preserve their inherent womanliness, is it too much to hope that the homely virtues of cheerfulness and content need not be left out of the account?

Otherwise some male Philistine may perchance be guilty of a stray regret for the light hearts of Miss Austen's generation.





By Mrs. PARR.

CHAPTER IX.

A CONSIDERABLE interval elapsed before Lord Rosemont rejoined his mother, and then, so altered was his manner, that had she not been party to the ruse played upon him, she would have been at a loss to account for his varied moods. He was, by turns, restless, absent, and silent; if he did speak it was to direct the conversation into one channel, and try to find out who were the leading beauties of the day.

"Who is the reigning toast?" said the Duchess, repeating a question he had just put to her. "In truth, should you demand your answer from a dozen, I warrant each would name a face that has some merit to carry off the prize. The Prince would swear 'twas Mrs. Bellenden; John Hervey declares for Molly Lepel; John Selwyn for Mrs. Farringdon, while your father's taste is divided 'twixt our old neighbour, Lady Sunderland, and Mrs. Howard, whom you remember at Langdale as Hetty Hobart."

"But describe them, mother," exclaimed Lord Rosemont, impatiently. "What are they like? Are they dark, fair, tall, short? I want a minute picture of each."

"Oh, then, you have set me a task indeed," laughed the Duchess. "But see below there, just three boxes from that one facing us, next to a lady with a saffron Fontange on her head, sits pretty Molly."

"Oh! I don't care about anyone in the house; I have looked them all well over, but there was one with dark hair and eyes, a pensive but not a sad expression, a face to touch one's heart, and—""

"Nay, son, but you draw from memory?"

"Not so," said Lord Rosemont; then fearing that he had broken his promise, he grew somewhat confused, adding, "I but caught sight, or rather I fancied I did, of such a face."

"Here in the house?" and the Duchess looked around with feigned interest.

"No, no; 'twas outside, not here; it does not signify and need not trouble your Grace. Where do you say you go to-morrow?" he asked, endeavouring to change the conversation.

"To-morrow! I receive at home."

Could it then be at his mother's house he and his mysterious fair one were to meet—it might be so.

"Will it be a large assembly?" he said.

"Indeed 'tis hard to say. I give no set invitations, but it pleases me to see my friends have not ceased to bear me in their memories, and on my reception nights most of them contrive to look in upon me if for only a few minutes. Shall I be honoured by my son's company?"

"Most certainly, yes; my lengthened absence makes it needful that I be presented anew to all your set"; then with a weary sigh he added, "Mother, would you be very shocked if I confessed to feeling somewhat tired of the play, and quite ready, at your good pleasure, to conduct you to your chair."

"Promise that you set the blame of our departure on my shoulders," answered the Duchess, laughing, "and I will go at once; they will forgive an old woman's ill taste, but were it blown about that any man, and he a young man, could be so blind to Bracegirdle's brown beauty, the whole town would declare that my son had been turned into a

savage, and wonder not to see you with tattooed face and tomahawk by side. We will wait a few minutes longer, and then, at a convenient moment, quietly withdraw."

On arriving home, Lord Rosemont said he felt fatigued, and that he would be glad to say goodnight at once and retire to his own apartment; but ere he went he put a question which, during the last half hour, had greatly disturbed him.

"Mother," he said, "shall you expect to see Lord Downham"—here he hesitated—"and his daughter to-morrow evening?"

"That, I should say, depends on the result of your morning's visit. You intend going to Downham House to-morrow? Indeed, I wrote a note saying that you might be expected."

Lord Rosemont took two or three turns up and down the room.

"Mother," he said, "it is of no use disguising it to you or to myself. Every hour since I arrived in England my dislike to this disgraceful connection has increased in strength; I cannot endure it, though it costs me all I possess, I must be freed from it."

"But you have not seen her yet; believe me, your wife——"

"Wife! Mother, for heaven's sake spare me; she is no wife of mine—the marriage was nothing but a trap, an artful snare which had been set for my father."

"Which, to save him, his son consented to be caught in. You are none the less tender, now, Rosemont? You would not draw down disgrace on us and condemn your father a second time to exile?"

"No, mother, no," Lord Rosemont answered, wiping his face, and so hiding it from view. "I had forgotten—I am selfish."

Lady Torbolton laid her hand on his shoulder as she said: "Think not, because I plead another's cause, that I am blind to the great sacrifice you made, or to the suffering you endure; but let us look at her position. Can any humiliation be greater than for a woman to be forced upon a man who takes her out of hard necessity?"

"Few men would take a Downham for aught else," muttered Lord Rosemont.

The Duchess shook her head.

"You are prejudiced, my son, and, not unnaturally so against her father, but remember that the daughter has never forgotten that she is your wife, so that if to-morrow you called her by your name, 'twould but receive fresh lustre because that Sarah Downham bore it. Surely for that we are in a way heholden to her?''

Seeing she paused for an answer, Lord Rosemont tried to force himself to say "Yes," but 'twas in vain, a demon of hatred seemed to possess him, and, jumping up, he exclaimed:

"No, mother, fore heaven, I would sooner the whole town rang with her folly than hear you praise the dull virtues which but spring from the plain fashion of her face; not that her homely looks affect me, for, were she as lovely as an angel, I do but swear I should hate her but the more bitterly."

"Son, you are unjust," said the Duchess, reproachfully; "what, then, is it but to repudiate your wife that you have come back to us? Alas, if so, God pity us, for we have all still much to bear," and overcome by her emotion and contending anxieties she burst into tears.

What if his heart was already surrendered into another's keeping? how would it fare with her, and what would become of Sarah? This crushing of all hope would be her death, for until now she had not known how confidently she had counted upon a sweet face and sweeter nature proving victorious over every drawback.

In an instant her son was at her side begging her to forget the hasty words he had spoken.

"I am a coward, mother," he said, "only brave when no danger is at hand. Within me to-night something has been stirred by which a fire has been kindled, but now that I have belched out the flame, 'twill die and leave me as callous as before."

"While you were absent abroad, you saw no one whose image stands 'twixt you and the fair qualities of any woman you may now meet?"

"While away I studiously avoided the few chances I had of being in the society of ladies; perhaps in so doing I acted unwisely, and only rendered my heart more inflammable than it otherwise would have been. Certainly," he added, with a sigh, "never before to-night did I feel so to kick against my fate; inclination prompts me to any shift rather than to go to Downham House; 'tis not the going, 'tis to what it may lead; but take heart, mother, as long as my father's life is spared to us I will do nothing to draw down Lord Downham's resentment. To tell you the truth, my chief hope is

formed on the little liking such a man will probably feel towards a needy son-in-law, and—thank the Lord—I'm not a combed and curled gallant to find favour in the lady's eyes; so my word on it, but your grace will find the two of them nothing loath to get quit of their sorry bargain."

The Duchess shook her head; she saw that further argument was vain—the result must be left to time. "Ah, well," she said, "in whatever comes to pass, your happiness is my one desire, and knowing all you have sacrificed for us, I feel it impossible for such devotion to go unrewarded. We will get to rest now, my son, and leave to-morrow to usher in

its own joys or sorrows."

A few more words and Lord Rosemont took his leave immediately, on which the Duchess's woman came to say that Mr. Merton was outside waiting with a note from Lady Sarah.

"Fetch him here," said her Mistress, "and I will deliver to him his reply."

Merton was ushered in, and delivered into her grace's hand a hastily-written epistle which, after giving a short account of the success of their stratagem, finished by telling how Lord Rosemont had followed her out, had implored her name and another meeting. "So that my head is whirling round," she wrote, "and my heart beats time to it. I can think of nothing but him—his face, his voice, his words, all have taken possession of my senses. Will he have pity on my poor affection and accept the love I have no longer power to take from him? Ah me! if not, my life will soon spend itself in a grief too profound for this dull pen to give utterance to! Dear Madam, suspense is so cruel, that in your pity urge him to come here to-morrow, so that my fate be decided. Until then, adieu, sweet mother. Kind friend, think of me to-night, pray yet once more that thy little Sarah may obtain her heart's desire, so that 'The Mourning Bride' (for such indeed was I), be speedily transformed into a joyful wife."

"Poor child!" sighed the Duchess. "I know not how 'twill end. My heart is torn with contending anxieties for both their dear sakes. Would it have been best, while his fancy was stirred, to have let him follow after thee? I know not. Neither will I disturb thee with such doubts, upon which thy mind does of necessity run, but will content myself with returning a few words of assurance and sympathy."

These, when written, she gave to Merton, bidding him deliver the note into no other hands than Madam Harcourt's; to whom a line was also sent, saying that the Duchess confided Lady Sarah to her care, knowing she would share in the anxiety she felt that the child should have such a night's rest as would most certainly insure her good looks for the following morning.

Mrs. Harcourt carried both these missives to Lady Sarah, who, divested of her finery, lay like a ball of crumpled dimity curled up outside the stitched coverlet of her high bed. Her excitement had passed away, leaving her full of anxious fears, which Mrs. Harcourt had vainly striven to dispel.

"Now see what the Duchess says to me," she said, as Sarah put into her hand the little note which she had just finished reading; "'tis very true—her fears are only just, and if no rest comes to your poor weary eyes they will look dull and sunken, and your face white, and faded as a forgotten flower."

"Nay—nay, but this must never be," cried Lady Sarah, starting up, and ready to avert, by any means, such a dreadful possibility.

"Then you must sip the posset Cicely is bringing, and after that no more talking nor thinking, but shut your eyes and make up your mind to go to sleep. Trust me, dear child, your fears are vain; nothing but happiness will come of to-morrow's meeting."

As Lady Sarah promised to obey this advice, Mrs. Harcourt only waited until her instructions were fully carried out. Then she sent Cicely away, and, after a few minutes watching, stole softly out of the room. Finding all quiet, Sarah ventured to open one eye, then the other-yes, she was alone. They had both left her, and assured on this point she clambered down, and, feeling her way by the great carved posts of the bed, she felt for her jewel box; in it lay her husband's portrait, and the scrap of paper he had thrust into her hand. Cicely had placed them there while she undressed her, and afterwards Lady Sarah had felt shy at asking for them to be restored to her. "But I shall sleep better with them near me," she said to herself, as she groped her way back. Laying her head down, she pressed the miniature close to her soft, round cheek; and, as she did so, she murmured: "A good night to my sweet lord, and may his dreams be of her whose head he thus pillows."

CHAPTER X.

Or all the actors in this little plot none fared so badly as the hero; and when the morning light began peeping through the chinks of his shuttered window, he could have almost vowed he had never once closed his eyes in sleep, neither had he for a moment been able to put from his mind his unhappy position. To recount or to follow the varied workings of a distracted mind is a task neither easy nor pleasant. Suffice it to say, that in the hours that had gone by, Lord Rosemont had seen every hope of release kindle and die out; full twenty times he had traced, without a stumbling block, the whole process of successful separation, and then declared such a course impossible. He had left the country; he had given up his title; he had gone through a thousand probabilities and impossibilities, and the result was that he found himself no nearer knowing how best to act or what best to do; he only felt that a dull heavy weight of honour and duty bound him to forget one woman and seek out another.

To avoid worse coming, he would delay no longer, but go that very day to Downham House. His mother had said that she he was forced to call wife was there waiting, no doubt, to receive him; and then he sighed, casting an envious thought at the easy-morals of those gallants who took their pleasure without any sting of conscience to twitten.

Descending later to his mother's room he was thankful that the Duchess neither noticed his pallor, nor questioned him concerning it. Her anxiety seemed newly aroused by a conversation she had just held with the Duke's physician, some points of which evidently troubled her.

"I spoke," she said, "of your possible desire to renew your travels, but he fears 'twould not be safe to extend your absence even so far as Spain or Germany."

"Rest assured that I have no thought of leaving home, mother," said Lord Rosemont; "if I should not enter very generally into company, the Duke's failing health affords me the very best excuse for indulging my natural love of study and retirement."

"Except that you pay your necessary visit to the Court. I shall press nothing further on you; but whatever paths my son may tread, he must count upon finding his old mother following close in his steps."

Thus, without actually speaking of the impending visit, they both glanced at the probable result. After a time, Lord Rosemont rose, saying, as he prepared to take his departure:

"You will not allow my absence to interfere with your engagements, mother. It may be that I shall not join you until your guests of this evening have departed."

"As you will," answered the Duchess, striving to maintain her calmness.

"Notwithstanding, I shall hope to see you, and —and my blessing go with you, son."

He gave her no answer, but, stooping down, kissed her, and, a few minutes after, was on his way to Downham House. He took a somewhat roundabout route, saying to himself that his object was to avoid passing St. Paul's, the scene of his fatal marriage. His pace, which at setting out had been none of the briskest, gradually slackened, until, having turned the corner, which brought the house in view, he actually stood still, trying to overcome the irresistible desire which possessed him to face round and run anywhere away out of sight. He took two or three turns up and down the street before he mustered sufficient courage to make a few desperate strides forward, seize the huge knocker, and seal his fate by using it with a vigour quite unnecessary, in the opinion of the porter, who sat taking his after-dinner doze.

The only fact which was hereafter fixed on Lord Rosemont's memory, was the emphatic manner in which he impressed upon the man who came forward his desire not to see Lord Downham; he had come, he explained, to pay his respects to Lady Sarah, and into her presence alone he desired to be ushered. Merton, however, who had been stationed ready for this service, understood his lordship's scruples, and only begged him to rest assured that her ladyship had given strict orders that she was to be denied to all save his lordship, whose visit she was awaiting with anxiety.

Occupied with thoughts of the impending meeting, Lord Rosemont had no attention to bestow upon the wonderful appearance presented inside the house. The famous statue of Hercules (for which the Earl had paid £800) he passed without a second glance; the Cuyps, the Vemloos, which adorned the walls leading to the grand

reception rooms, were all lost upon him. He bestowed no notice on the painted ceilings, never heeded the carved wood, noted nothing, saw nothing, until he found himself ushered into a small apartment, where Merton left him, saying he would forthwith announce his arrival to her ladyship's waiting-woman, who would convey it with all possible speed to "my lady."

Seeing he was alone. Lord Rosemont breathed more freely. Gradually he looked around him, and as the time went on, he began taking a thorough survey of the room. It was furnished with much elegance and good taste, and was evidently the general sitting-room of its owner. In one window stood an embroidery frame, with the needle hanging and the crewels scattered as if the employment had been just speedily abandoned. A spindlelegged harpsichord took up one side of the opposite wall, with the favourite air "Cara Sposa" open upon it. Alongside some writing materials lay a sweetmeat box in enamel, and a Dutch fan in curiously painted leather. A Japanese cabinet showed vases of crackle porcelain, a Dresden tea-service, and some "loves of monsters," equally the delight of statesmen, generals, and fine ladies. Standing by the further window-seat were two jars of Nankin china, the contents of which gave out a scent of dried rose-leaves and lavender. Rosemont had just risen to get a fuller sniff of this pleasant perfume, when a dallying with the doorhandle made him hastily draw back, and take up a position so that he might best escape scrutiny. Another minute passed, the door slowly opened, he heard a little rustle and then-not a sound except the thud, thud, of his heart, and tick, tick, tick, of every pulse in his body. All his courage had taken flight; his eyes refused to look up; his voice would scarce obey him.

"Madam," he managed to get out as he made a profound reverence. "Madam," and with a tremendous effort he raised his eyes, and lo, the unknown fair of the previous night stood trembling before him—her small head bent slightly forward, her little hands clasped, her sweet mouth quivering with emotion, her tearful eyes fixed upon him with such a wistful gaze of tender entreaty that, forgetting all his prudent resolves what he was here for, whom he came to see, Lord Rosemont involuntarily stretched out his arms towards her.

"Husband!" surely 'twas husband that he heard her murmur. But no, it could not be. Some demon was cheating him; the room swam round; the air grew thick and heavy with the scent; he felt choking, and pulled at his cravat to try and give utterance to the words which refused to come.

"Tell me," he cried, at length, in a voice thick and hoarse with emotion. "Tell me is it—ah no, it cannot be. You are not Lord Downham's daughter —my wife?"

Reading in the surprise, which overcame and mastered him, his great joy, Sarah's whole nature seemed moved beyond her own control. Whether was she going to laugh or to cry? Her smiles looked like the sun on a day of April showers; they lighted up her whole face as she answered:

"Yes—I—I am—the dowdy they married you to," and with the last word, out burst the pent-up sobs, and down fell the quick rain of tears.

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Before those tears were fairly dried, these two young hearts had driven out all trace of misgiving and regret; vows were exchanged, promises given, pardon granted. Lord Rosemont vowed, and ever after-proved, that come what niight, he could never weary of listening to the sweet ruse by which a wife had stolen unawares her husband's heart.

It was not long before the good Duchess was called on to share in her children's joy. Gradually the little romance eked out, stole its way to Court, and then was spread abroad, so that the whole town rang in praise of "The Mourning Bride," as in the toasts to her honour they named Lady Rosemont.

By the death of his father in 1720 Lord Rosemont succeeded to the dukedom, and Sarah became Duchess of Torbolton. For thirty years she and the Duke lived together in love and happiness, the delight of their children, the pride of their tenantry, courted and admired by all who knew them.

In 1749 death parted this loving couple, but only for one year, at the end of it their sorrowing-children laid their mother by the side of the husband, whose love and pride she had so fairly won.

In Torbolton Castle hangs a portrait of Sarah, Duchess of Torbolton; it is taken in the dress she wore the night on which she stole her husband's love, in memory of which is inscribed the date, and underneath "The Mourning Bride."

ATALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

Subject for September—"Are athletics for ladies antagonistic to feminine refinement?" Papers not to exceed five hundred words, and to be sent in on or before September 25th. The best paper on either side will be published in the magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

As a finish to the Reading Union year, it is proposed to offer, in place of the usual competitions, two prizes of three guineas and a guinea and a-half respectively for the first and second best short story of not more than three thousand words. Open to all members of the Reading Union. Papers must be sent in on or before October 10th.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (AUGUST).

T

- 1. In the first satire of the second book of Horace, by Pope.
- 2. In the sixth epistle of the first book of *Horace*, also by Pope.

11

- 1. From Sea Dreams, Tennyson.
- 2. From Tennyson's Ode sung at the opening of the International Exhibition,

Ш

- 1. From A Woman's Last Word, Robert Browning.
- 2. From the same.
- 3. From Justans Tyrannus, by Browning.

IV.

- 1. From Cinthio's Hecatomithe.
- 2. One version of it is in *Holinshed*, but he may have taken some hints from an old play, *The True Chronicle History of King Leir*.

V

- t. From The Bird's Release, by Mrs. Hemans.
 - 2. From The Bride of the Greek Isle, Mrs. Hemans.

VI.

- "Are these the fields of soft, delicious grass,
 These the old hills with secret things to tell?
 O my dead youth, was this inevitable,
- That with thy passing, Nature, too, should pass?"
- By Philip Marston.

SEARCH QUESTIONS (SEPTEMBER).

1.

- 1. Give the English translation of the following lines:-
 - " Perpetuâ ambitâ bis terră præmia lactis Hæc habet altrici Capra Secunda Jovis."
- 2. By whom were they written?

7.1

- t. Who was the founder of the sect sometimes called Behmenites and sometimes Aureacrucians?
- 2. Who was the author of the two comedies entitled The Man of the World and Love à la Mode !

TFF

- 1. Whence comes the original story of As You Like It?
- 2. Where are the lines, "Who ever loved that loved not at first sight" (Act iii., sc. v., l. 82) quoted from?

IV.

- 1. Give authors of following quotations-
 - " If chance assign'd, Were to my mind, By every kind Of Destiny;

Yet would I crave Nought else to have But dearest life and liberty."

- "In the merry month of May, In a morn by break of day, With a troop of damsels playing, Forth—I went—forsooth—a-maying."
- " My mind to me a kingdom is, Such perfect joy therein I find; That it excels all other bliss Which God or Nature hath assign'd."

3.7

1. What is the origin of Sir Walter Scott's song, The Twa Corbies!

VI.

- 1. Who were the composers of the first English sonnets? At what dates?
- 2. What was the first appearance of any in book form?









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